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MASTERS AND WORKMEN

A TALE

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE SOCIAL AND MORAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

By LORD B——.

Ay verily, it will be a comely sight in England, when men shall go on as in a better world, bearing with each other's infirmities, joining in each other's comforts.—Sir Walter Scott.—Woodstock.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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MASTERS AND WORKMEN

CHAPTER I.

I've said too much unto a heart of stone.
There's something in me that reproves my fault;
But such a headstrong, potent fault it is,
That it but mocks reproof.

SHAKSPERE.

FORREST left the house of Mr. Graves with a heart full of bitterness—and the most profound contempt for his meanness. His mind was fully made up as to the course he had to pursue; and though he had ac-

cepted the five pounds intended for his sister, he did not consider that it imposed on him any debt of gratitude; but, on the contrary, aggravated, by insult, the wrongs of the unfortunate Lucy. With moody brow and hurried steps, he turned into the narrow street—where, as he had told the banker, his sister was wandering up and down, in trouble and anxiety, awaiting his return.

Her mind was more collected than usual that morning, and her dress cleaner than it had been for long. The return of her brother—the feeling that some one who belonged to her, had acknowledged and befriended her, even in her degraded state, had afforded comfort to this poor, destitute outcast of society—and with some remains of her former vanity, she had endeavoured to obtain his approbation by making as decent an appearance as she could. But still her garments were ill-assorted and old. Like her beauty, they had once been above her station, delicate

and fresh, but were now faded and tarnished. As soon as Forrest appeared in the street—she came rapidly towards him.

"Well, John," she said, eagerly, "what news?—Will he help us to a farm, or even a cottage, where we can end our days in peace?"

"Neither" he replied abruptly. "We may go to the work-house, for what he cares to the contrary. He told me you were a worthless slut, who was dear at five pounds, and that is all I have got for my patience. I only wish I had followed my own way, instead of listening to you, and given him a sound horse-whipping, as soon as I had learnt how badly he had used you."

"He deserves it," said Lucy, "but he is a gentleman; and it would only have brought you into more trouble, John."

"A pretty gentleman, indeed! I scorn such gentlemen, who have only set themselves up, by grinding down the poor," ex-

claimed Forrest, with a burst of indignation. "He is neither better born, nor better bred, than I am; and if I had only been half as great a rascal as he is, I might, with common prudence, have been quite as much a gentleman! But there is something besides money goes to the making of a gentleman, to my thinking. I could have knocked the fellow down, when he had the audacity to offer me the five pounds! pitiful scoundrel!"

"Only five pounds!" repeated Lucy "That won't take us out to America?"

"No—nor five times five," said her brother. "It won't last us a month. But I did not spare him. I told him plainly how shamefully he had treated you; and by Heavens, Lucy, I am determined I will have revenge. I will hesitate no longer. I thought there might be some good feeling at the bottom of his heart; but now I know him better. I no longer wonder the workmen are taking up arms against him. Before I left his house, I had sworn, in my

heart, to join them ; and he shall have such a lesson, as he, and such as he, shall remember for many a long year, or my name is not Jack Forrest."

"Right, right," murmured Lucy.

"There are many of the country fellows know me well," he continued, "and will follow my advice for love of old times. I understand how to manage them, and they are got so desperate with bad wages and high prices, that before twenty-four hours are past, they shall help me to my revenge."

"You are angry now," said his sister, "when you have heard but the half, but if you knew all—"

"Don't I know all?" exclaimed Forrest, suddenly stopping short, and turning half round, so as to fix his searching eyes full upon the face of his unfortunate companion.

"No, no ; you don't know the half, nor the quarter, of that vile man's wickedness," she returned, in hurried accents.

"But hush—hush—don't ask me any more. I cannot tell you here! he made me swear secresy, and he threatened that if I ever breathed a word of the story to any human being, he would be the death of me."

"But you may say what you like, and he shall not harm you, now I am here to protect you," answered Forrest quickly.

"That is very true," said Lucy, whilst she glanced with a wild and terrified look around her. "But you see there are people coming, and that policeman is watching us. He has known me long, John, very long, and he will listen to us. Indeed, indeed, I cannot tell you in the streets."

"Let us go home to your lodging, then," returned the man, endeavouring to humour her fancy.

"Home!" cried Lucy, with a bitter laugh, "a pretty home is that roofless garret to be sure! No, no, if we must creep into that hole at night, we will keep out of it

by day, as long as we can. Let us go down to the potter's meadow, by the river side, and we will sit under the hedge in the sunshine, and then I will tell you all—all John—and you will promise to forgive me—for it is a dark story—and I know now that I went far astray.—But my poor head is not clear at all times. Since I was on the tread-mill, ten years ago, I have never been what I was before. Shame and sorrow well nigh broke my heart—and I was all alone—I had no one to help, or to pity me. All mocked me. Oh, John, it is a cruel world. Even the lost women who were my companions were jealous of my beauty, and laughed at what they called my fine airs. So, to drown care, I took to gin drinking and opium. It soothed me at first, but has driven me mad, I believe, at last. As long as I was in my senses, Graves gave me money now and then, for he was afraid of me. Wretched outcast as I was, I had him in my power."

"You!—you had him in your power!

the rich banker Mr. Graves, afraid of his poor ruined victim!" exclaimed Forrest in a tone of incredulity, for he felt now fully convinced, that the wits of the unfortunate creature were again wandering.

"Yes, of me!" answered Lucy. "He paid me to keep silence, when I was in my senses, but when he believed me mad, he feared me no longer, and he left me to starve. He hoped I should die, but I was of a stronger nature. My trials would have killed many, but I could not die with a good man's curse upon my head."

"In the name of fortune what does all this mean, Lucy?" eagerly demanded Forrest. "You bewilder and distract me."

"Come down to the meadow, and as I promised, I will tell you all," whispered the poor woman, passing her arm through his. "Indeed, John, I am tired of having such a heavy secret on my conscience, and there can be no sin in breaking such an oath! and if there is, I have worse perjury

to answer for! I need not hesitate, for there has long been no hope for me, even in heaven. Come then, come quickly, there is no time to lose, for you are my own brother, John, and will have mercy and pity for me. You shall hear all—all, and then you shall tell me, if I dare hope for man's, or God's forgiveness."

Greatly astonished, and doubting whether the slightest reliance could be placed upon the truth of Lucy's disclosures, in her excited state of mind, Forrest nevertheless accompanied her to the strange place she had chosen for her confession.

There, seated in the sun, under an old thorn tree, he remained during the greater part of that day, listening with wonder and indignation to the strange and terrible story which poor Lucy related, sometimes in a tolerably collected manner, at others wild and disjointed, as her agitated faculties were alternately collected, or confused. There was something terrible in the wild bursts of feeling and despair,

which frequently interrupted her narrative, and the broken words in which she revealed the darkest events of her history, like the cries of a troubled soul, brought with their sad and fearful energy, a conviction of their truth. Eagerly did Forrest listen, and he understood enough to convince him, that terrible injustice had been practised; that his vain and once lovely sister had been perverted to evil by flattery and falsehoods, and terror, till, completely involved in the intrigues of the man who had betrayed her, confused by his reasonings and bewildered by his menaces, she had been made the tool to effect the accomplishment of the atrocious schemes, by which he trusted to secure the favour and the undivided inheritance of Mr. Dalton.

Forrest had received a decent education, and though he had been a dissipated, he was not a bad-hearted man. He had been extravagant and ambitious, and therefore all his life in difficulties. His morality had

never been very strict, but he had never intentionally done any one an injury; he was generous, high-spirited and kind, and had an absolute horror of crime. His indignation, when he heard this narrative of Mr. Graves's guilt, was unbounded, and he declared, that had he previously known what Lucy had now confided to him, no necessity should have induced him to become a suppliant to such a depraved and heartless scoundrel.

Lucy was perfectly terrified by the expression of his indignation, and, hiding her face on her knees, when she had finished her confession, she wept bitterly.

"Oh, John, John!" she said, looking up at length. "Do not you curse me, too! do not you forsake me, though I know, I have long known there is no pardon for me in this world, or the next. I was led on step by step, and I knew not where I was going, till I was lost, lost for ever."

"Poor Lucy, fear me not, I have no right to blame you. You were my only

sister, and I was proud of your beauty, and I took no care to prevent your going astray. God has promised to have mercy on repentant sinners," continued the poor man, in a voice of despondency. "What else would become of us all. Oh Lucy, Lucy, had you and I been taught in our childhood to walk humbly in His ways, instead of being spoilt by our poor mother, as we were, in hopes of her old uncle's fortune, who left it all away from us at last, we should not now be afraid to kneel before the Almighty throne for mercy. Vanity and idleness have been both your ruin and mine. But lamentations will do us no good now. If the law cannot punish Graves for the wrongs he has done you and others, another way is open now, to teach him the power of the poor, when driven to desperation. Mr. Seaton has an equal right to vengeance, for he has been denied justice, even more than we. His time was nearly out at Sydney when I left. Has he come back Lucy, do you know?"

"Yes!" she replied, with a deep sigh. "Poor Charles Seaton, I have seen him once, but I was mad then—mad with drink!"

"I must find him then, and tell him all," returned Forrest, abruptly.

"No, no, not all," cried the poor creature, clasping her hands, "he must not know that I was the cause of his ruin."

"Foolish Lucy! does he not know that you swore falsely against him before the judge? Does he not know that he was innocent, and you accused him! you did not fear him then. If you repent, if you hope for pardon, all you can do now is to confess your falsehood to the world, and thus make him all the amends you can for the evil you have done him."

"I will do anything you think right," answered the poor creature, meekly. "Only don't talk of vengeance, John! vengeance is the Lord's. Seaton scorned my beauty, and I once thought too much of vengeance. No good ever comes of it."

Forrest took no notice of her last words, but eagerly demanded, if she knew where Seaton was to be found.

"Not I," replied Lucy, despondingly. "I met him in the street, but I was mad then, as I have told you, and they threatened to send me to the treadmill again, so I wandered up and down the country for many weeks, till hunger forced me back into the town again. I have always been afraid since to ask any one after him, and if you find him, don't tell him where I am. He would curse me, as his uncle has done!"

"You should not torment yourself with such fears, Lucy," said Forrest, kindly. "A man must have a heart of stone to curse you now, poor, broken-hearted creature. Come with me to my lodging, and wait there, whilst I go in search of Charles Seaton. You must not be seen wandering about the streets by yourself any more, Lucy. Do you understand me. You must

not be seen in your old haunts, for my sake, Lucy."

"Oh, yes, I understand you," she replied, looking long and earnestly in his face. "You want to make an honest woman of me again; but you can never do that," and she burst into tears, and her whole figure was convulsed by her hysterical sobs.

Forrest, though sad and broken-hearted, did all he could to console and comfort her despairing grief. He spoke to her again of Divine mercy, till her affliction was soothed, if not subdued, and then they arose together from the ground, and proceeded towards the humble street in the outskirts of the town, where Forrest had hired a miserable garret.

Long before they arrived there, the poor man saw, with dismay, that, excited by the events of the morning, the mind of his unfortunate sister was again completely bewildered. She had only a faint remembrance of all that had passed, and mingled

the past and the present together, in wild confusion. But when she, at length, laid herself upon his bed, and fell into a profound sleep, he ventured to leave her, trusting that she would remain tranquil, till he was able to return.

All that afternoon, Forrest hurried from one place to another in search of Seaton. Since the dreadful revelation of Graves's crimes had been made to him by his sister, he could find no rest from his extreme anxiety to acquaint Charles Seaton with facts, in which he was so deeply interested. Well knowing the full extent of the sufferings to which he had been subjected by his unjust condemnation, he felt it was his duty not to lose a moment in making reparation for the crimes of his sister, to the innocent man, on whom they had entailed such fearful consequences.

But of Seaton he could for long obtain no trace. At Mr. Dalton's, as may well be supposed, he could learn nothing. In fact, old Hannah shut the door in his face, as

soon as he pronounced the name of her master's nephew, little knowing that the happiness of Mr. Dalton, and all belonging to him, depended on that poor man's testimony. It was late in the evening, before he discovered that Miss Dalton had left her uncle's house, and judging it possible to learn something from this lady, or her servants, he proceeded, at once, to her lodging. But here again he was unfortunate; both she and Amy were from home, and not expected to return before night. He learnt, however, that Mr. Seaton frequently spent the evening there, and was daily occupied as a writer in Mr. Vernon's office; but the servant added, that he always left at six o'clock, and it was no use going there that evening in search of him, as the office must have been shut above an hour. If he wished particularly to see him, he was most likely to find him at Mr. Barnes's, in —— Terrace, where he lodged, she said. It was possible he might have re-

turned home, as Miss Dalton and his sister were out, and he had not come as usual to visit them that evening.

Thither, in consequence of this information, Forrest accordingly proceeded. The reasons were very important which made him so urgent to speak, at once, with Charles Seaton. Not only his impatience to make him all the reparation in his power for the great wrong which had been done him—but the consciousness that the events of the coming night, might, for ever, put it out of his power to do so, rendered him thus anxious to disclose to him, without further delay, the discovery he had made of the falsehood of Lucy's evidence against him. But Mr. Barnes had gone to take his evening's walk, and Seaton had not yet returned. The old housekeeper advised him to call in the morning.

"Too late—too late," he murmured, and he turned away with a sad and desponding heart.

He had wished to do good—but all his

efforts had been in vain. Four hours he had wandered from house to house in his unavailing search, and now, weary and disappointed, he felt that only one course remained for him to pursue. Had he met with Charles Seaton, his friendly voice and counsel might have turned him aside from the abyss into which he was about to plunge—but such timely aid was denied him, and now alone and desperate, he no longer hesitated to follow the evil dictates of his excited passions, and to give free indulgence, during the coming night, to the revengeful feeling towards Graves, which swelled his heart, and the reckless enmity against society, which, during the numerous mortifications and misfortunes, brought on him by the consequences of his own ill-directed conduct, had long festered, and, at length, almost entirely engrossed his mind. He was absolutely desperate and reckless; it seemed necessary, to his existence, that his passions should, in some way, find vent, and before

he regained his wretched dwelling, he had sternly resolved to follow their evil inspiration, were it even unto death.

To his surprise and disappointment, when he entered the garret where he had left Lucy, he no longer found her there. He knew not where to seek her ; he was worn out with fatigue, and aware, that to accomplish his plans, he must be astir during the whole of the coming night, he lay down, as he was, on his humble bed, and, in a few minutes, forgot all his troubles and anxieties in a sound sleep.

CHAPTER II.

No land ever yet complained of its too redundant flocks and herds; yet the weight of a redundant population may press the very life out of virtue—nay, the very soul out of human nature.—*Edinburgh Review.*

When Mr. Dalton reached home, he found his old servant, Hannah, anxiously awaiting him in the passage, for it was very rare for her master to remain abroad so late, on such a stormy night. Since the departure of Grace, this faithful creature had done every thing in her power to supply, by her

attentions, the want of her young mistress, and she now anxiously assisted Mr. Dalton in laying aside his cloak, which was heavy with rain.

"There has been one here who very much wanted to speak with you, sir," she said, "and I tried to persuade her to wait, for it was raining fast; but she said she would come again when the sun shone."

"Do you know who she was?"

"I never saw her, to my knowledge, before; but no doubt she is a beggar, for her clothes were all in rags, and she looked miserably poor."

"Show her in to me, should she call again," was Mr. Dalton's reply, and he withdrew into his library, to look over the letters and papers, which had arrived during his absence.

He was, ere long, interrupted in this occupation, by the arrival of his principal clerk, Mr. Barnes, whom he received, at such an unusual hour, with undisguised astonishment. The little man was evident-

ly in a great state of excitement, and had walked very fast, so that he had to rub his forehead several times with his pocket handkerchief, and pause a minute or two, to put his faculties in order, before he could commence an explanation of the object of his visit.

"After you left the office this afternoon, sir, we heard very bad news," he began,—"very bad news, indeed, sir! I thought it my duty to come up to you as soon as possible. It may be true—it may be false—always lies in circulation, that we know; but still forewarned—forearmed."

"And what may this intelligence be," enquired Mr. Dalton.

"You know, sir, next week is the time for our engaging our pitmen for a year again—binding—sir. And we understand they had a great meeting this forenoon, where sundry violent fellows held forth, and they have agreed to strike for higher wages, and to take up arms, if need be,

to obtain such terms as they choose to impose."

"I cannot blame them for my part," answered the gentleman, "but I pity them. They have a right to protect their own interests to the utmost of their power, and in many respects they have been badly used. They are now worse advised, for it is only by moral force that they can obtain redress."

"Some may have reason to complain, no doubt," answered Barnes, "but your workmen certainly not. No one can say that you have ever withheld the payment which is justly their due."

"I have endeavoured to act justly," said Mr. Dalton, "and I was born too nearly on a level with them, not fully to understand and sympathise with their wants and their rights."

"Yes, sir, and your people know your kind feelings towards them, and love you like a father, but it seems that wont help

us in the present case. The chiefs of the discontented have decided that no man is to be allowed to work, till the claims of all are granted. Arms are everywhere secretly prepared, and on the binding day, the workmen are to march as an organized band of rebels, and impose their own terms on the masters. All who dare to accept work in defiance of the general league are to be regarded as enemies, and proceeded against accordingly. What is worse still, the workmen at the iron works, whose sufferings since the fall of wages have really been dreadful, especially those under Mr. Graves, have formed a plan of rebellion and plunder, and intend to break out at the same time with the pitmen, by attacking the granary, where Graves, since he began to speculate in corn, has laid up large supplies."

"Poor fellows, they will do themselves and their families more injury than any one else," said the gentleman, "and by open violence they can gain nothing."

"I fear there must be fighting, sir," answered Mr. Barnes, shuffling very uncomfortably on his chair.

"May God avert it," returned Mr. Dalton, "for if blood should flow, the sufferings of those whom hunger has driven to violence, in despair, will be aggravated tenfold, and how often must such catastrophes occur, before the governing classes of society are convinced, that not only the welfare of their dependents, but their own security demand such laws and institutions, as are calculated to defend the interests of the poor, as well as the interests of the rich. It is a terrible affair, Mr. Barnes, but we must do all that lies in our power to prevent the spread of mischief, and the inevitable evils which all disorders entail upon society."

"Must we send for the military, sir!"

"Come to me early to-morrow morning, and we will go together amongst my work people, and hear if they have any reasonable wants or wishes unfulfilled. I will

then endeavour to explain to them as a friend, that their real interest will be best consulted, by keeping aloof from all rebellious projects ; and as they know by experience they can believe me, perhaps they may follow my advice."

"Yes, sir, yes! that may do wonders," returned Mr. Barnes, eagerly. "Gentlemen of education like yourself come too little amongst these poor fellows, and so, as they never hear really disinterested, reasonable advice, and friendly counsel, they fall totally into the power of methodist enthusiasts, and political fanatics, who by exciting their untutored passions, can do with them just what they please."

"You are right, but unfortunately since my youth this division between the upper and lower classes has, by luxury and the love of pleasure, become every day wider. The people finding no one troubles themselves more about their welfare, than is absolutely necessary to prevent pestilence and rebellion, have forgotten their respect

for their superiors, and are ceasing to depend on their assistance. Every man is now struggling for himself—for the education by which he believes the well-being and independence of his children can alone be assured, and for the political rights, which will bestow on him a share in the making of the laws of his country, by which he is governed. The higher ranks can no longer arrest this agitation ; but it is the duty of those already possessing the advantages of a moral education to endeavour to mollify and elevate its character, and to extend a virtuous and purifying influence, over one of the greatest movements which has ever agitated human society."

"Heaven knows where it will all end, sir," said good Mr. Barnes, in a lamentable voice. "For my part, I am afraid things instead of mending, go from bad to worse. Religion might do much, if it taught brotherly love ; but, unluckily, even its professors have no agreement amongst

themselves; and instead of soothing the people's passions, each sect has a preacher who tries to excite them for his own advantage."

"Ignorance is ever liable to be made the slave of passion and fanaticism," returned Mr. Dalton. "Under this conviction, I have endeavoured to secure to the families of all whom I employ a free education. Nothing else can render them worthy and useful members of a society which can never be truly prosperous till all its classes are united together in love, and a clear sense of moral and religious duty. These discontented workmen, whilst struggling for their own rights by force of arms, are too ignorant to understand that they are trespassing on the rights of others. Their welfare greatly depends on the welfare of the middle classes; and yet they are excited by fanatics to regard them as their enemies, and to seek to destroy the property of those from whom they derive the payment of their labour. It is like rooting

out the unripe corn destined to afford food for the coming winter. It may belong to one, but it would have nourished many. No, no, Mr. Barnes, there must be no bloodshed, and fires, and such destruction. It only widens the breach and makes hatred more bitter. I will go without further delay, to other coal owners, and consult what is best to be done."

"But it rains heavily, sir!"

"No matter, we must not be delayed by trifles, when the peace of society and the welfare of hundreds is at stake."

So saying, Mr. Dalton again left his home that stormy night. The worthy Barnes accompanied him a part of the way into the town; and when they parted, it was with a promise to meet at an early hour on the morrow.

Mr. Dalton was no imaginative dreamer, as to the possibility of establishing any visionary system of society on the ruin of existing institutions. Convinced that, whilst man remains on earth, he can neither at-

tain to perfect virtue nor perfect happiness; he had no wish to sacrifice the actual well-being of one part of his fellow countrymen by wild experiments, for the uncertain benefit of the remainder; but he felt that the great increase of population, the discoveries of science, and the extension of knowledge, had rendered certain changes absolutely necessary for the well-being of all. He saw that a false education, wealth, and pleasure, too frequently made the rich consider, as their exclusive privilege, the rights which are the common property of all mankind.

He saw that dissipation and luxury were undermining in the upper classes, many of the healthy virtues of our ancestors, whilst the poor, congregated in unhealthy masses in large towns, either sunk in vice and misery, or fighting their own way to knowledge, become, in times of distress, a danger to the society which had previously neglected them. He saw that all were

thinking of their rights, and very few of their duties.

Mr. Dalton had long considered, that a healthy moral education, which fitted both men and women to become active and useful members of society, in whatever rank they might be born, was the best antidote to these evils. He wished to see the youth of the higher classes saved from the luxuries of private tutors, and the extravagant idleness of a university, whilst the doors of free schools are opened to the poor of every sect and denomination. He wished to see the education of all, founded on the principles of universal and truly Christian love and truth, which can alone unite the rich to the poor, and the poor to the rich, and rescue both from the contamination of the vices into which both are prone to fall. He wished that all should enjoy their rights as freely as possible, without infringing on the rights of others—and in this lay all the politics of this pure, good man.

To forward these objects, and to advance the moral welfare of his fellow creatures, had long been the chief aim of his existence; and anxious to prevent the evils attendant on a serious misunderstanding between the masters and their workmen, he spent the whole of that evening in endeavouring to persuade all such of the former, as resided in the town, to makes such timely and reasonable concessions to the men as might, in all probability, appease their discontent. Before he returned home, he had succeeded in making an arrangement, that a general meeting of the coal owners should be called in the course of a few days, to discuss the most important points in dispute.

When Mr. Barnes reached his comfortable little dwelling, about eight o'clock, he was surprised to find that Charles Seaton had not returned as he promised to do, to partake of a nice little supper, prepared in honour of the worthy man's birthday, by his old housekeeper.

His hunger, and his habits of order and punctuality, did not, however, permit him to wait, and having finished his repast, and made himself comfortable in his dressing-gown and slippers, he sat down with a glass of brandy and water beside him, to enjoy the felicity of practising sundry old airs on his violoncello. By the assistance of his spectacles, and two well snuffed candles, he continued drawing out tones from his instrument, which awoke his neighbour, the maiden lady, from a comfortable nap in her easy chair, and beating time with his foot, in a perfect ecstasy at his own performance of

'Hope told a flattering tale,'

he soon forgot, alike his fears of rebellion, and the daily labours of the office.

Fully engrossed by his favourite recreation, a happier man could not have been found on the face of the earth at that moment, than worthy Mr. Barnes. His

innocent enjoyment was in the present—the rarest and least appreciated of all enjoyments. Before long, there was a knock at the house door, and he felt glad that Charles Seaton was coming to participate in his amusement, and proud of his performance, he played on with increased energy, expecting every moment to be interrupted by the entrance of his friend. But he had got to the end of the tune, and begun it again, before the housekeeper, well aware of the impropriety of interrupting her master's musical studies, softly entered, and closing the door behind her, stood quietly waiting till it was his pleasure to address her.

At length, finishing off with a full chord, he looked at her, for a minute, over his spectacles, and then asked her, with some astonishment, what had become of Mr. Seaton.

"I cannot say, indeed, sir," was the reply; "but if I may be so bold, sir, there

is a woman in the passage, who would be glad to speak with you,"

"A woman, Betty," cried Mr. Barnes, arising, and carefully setting aside his Violoncello, "what in the name of fortune can a woman want with me?"

"Cannot say, indeed, sir," was the reply. "Something about a child, sir, I think she said."

"A child!" exclaimed Mr. Barnes, in utter horror and amazement. "Send her away, Betty! She has certainly mistaken the house, send her away. I can have nothing to do with women and children! never would be plagued with them, in the whole course of my life,"

"But she says she must see you, sir," persisted the housekeeper.

"Must see me indeed.—Must! I like that, and at this hour of the evening too! I wonder what Miss Smith next door, thought of such a visitor, if she saw her in the lamp. Send her away, Betty. I

know nothing about her, upon my word of honour."

"But it is raining so hard—and she says she has come so far—had you not better see her first, sir?"

"Upon my word it is very disagreeable, very embarrassing, indeed. I expect Mr. Seaton every moment, and if he comes, and finds me closeted with a woman at this time of night, who knows what he might think! No, no, Betty, send her away. I can have nothing to say to strange women, at this time of night."

But I told her you were at home, sir, and she heard the music, and so, as she says she has business with you, you had best see her at once, and have done with it," answered Betty, who generally took upon her to direct her master in such little affairs.

"Well, it is really very provoking to be interrupted in this manner, the instrument in tune, and all right," muttered Mr. Barnes, placing himself with his back to

the fire, when he found that all further opposition was unavailing. "If I really must see her Betty, the sooner it is over the better."

Betty who was exceedingly curious, and quite as much astonished as her master, at such an unusal occurrence, did not wait for a second command, but immediately opened the parlour door, and desiring the woman in the passage to enter, she herself withdrew so far as to be invisible, but at the same time not too far to overhear all that passed, between her master and his female visitor.

Mr. Barnes felt exceedingly uncomfortable, when he saw a tall, slender female, in garments which had once probably been those of a lady, but were now faded, torn and dripping with wet, enter his dining-room. An old straw bonnet, tied down with a silk handkerchief, scarcely covered her disordered dark brown hair, and left it free to hang in long tresses, on each side of her pale and haggard face. She had evidently once been very pretty, and the

manner though very strange, was not coarse, in which she curtsied and simpered at Mr. Barnes, when she had shut the room door.

The worthy clerk made her a bow, and then glanced with considerable anxiety at her muddy shoes, as she advanced over his Kidderminster carpet, for no ancient spinster could be more particular than Mr. Brown.

"Beg you will be seated, ma'am," he said pointing to a chair, though he did it greatly against his will. "Have business with me I understand."

"Yes, sir," replied the stranger, "I beg pardon for intruding, but I have very particular business. You see before you, a poor, lost woman, sir!"

"The devil I do, ma'am!" exclaimed Mr. Barnes, taking a pinch of snuff, in the greatest consternation.

"Yes, sir," she returned, "I confess it to my shame," and bursting into tears, she

covered her face with a torn pocket hadkerchief, and sobbed aloud.

"Upon my word, ma'am," said Mr. Barnes, moving in great agitation from one leg to the other, "this is very extraordinary conduct! never had the pleasure of seeing you before, that I remember, in the whole course of my life; and I tell you frankly I am not accustomed to receive such company, at this time of night."

"Oh, dear, Mr. Barnes," returned the woman, suddenly resuming her smiles, "you have seen me very often, indeed, sir, when we were both younger than we are now. You were very civil to me, when I was a pretty girl, Mr. Barnes."

"Upon my word of honor, I don't understand you, ma'am, in the least," said the worthy man, blushing as red as scarlet, "there must be some mistake here, some very strange mistake."

"Oh, no—no mistake in the world! you see a poor, broken-hearted creature before

you, who, distracted by an evil conscience, has come to ask comfort and assistance from you. Every one else has turned their back upon me; I have been in prison—I have been hunted like a dog through the streets; honest women turn their face away from me; those who were once kind to me, heap curses on my name, and I deserve it all! yes, and ten thousand times worse, were it possible, for my evil and wicked deeds."

Mr. Barnes watched the changing countenance of his companion, and listened to this extraordinary burst of feeling, with a consternation that momentarily increased. The sudden variation in the woman's manner, the wildness of her eyes, and the incoherence of her language, left him little doubt, that she was partially, if not entirely deranged; and if he had been alarmed at the idea of a woman's visit at such an unseasonable hour, the idea of a mad woman taking up her abode in his house for the night, was totally insup-

portable. The fear of the reports to which so extraordinary an occurrence would inevitably give rise, filled him with dismay; but he had yet presence of mind to reflect, that the most prudent course was, to treat her with civility, and to get her away, if possible, under the cover of the darkness.

"I think you alluded to having known me in my youth, ma'am," he said, in pursuance of this resolution; "may I inquire where I had the honour of meeting you?"

"Mr. Barnes," she said, suddenly arising, and coming close up to him, "that is no manner to speak to me; it never was an honour to know me, and now it is a disgrace. But I have forgotten my business all this while. I have been to Mr. Dalton's, but they would not let me see him. They said he was out, though such floods of rain were falling, that I was sure no one could be abroad on such a night, except a poor broken-hearted creature, who has not where to lay her head."

"To Mr. Dalton's, do you say? what do you know of Mr. Dalton?"

"Too much! too much! I might have escaped ruin, had I never heard his name!"

"Woman!" exclaimed Mr. Barnes, his whole figure becoming dilated with sudden indignation, which really gave something almost approaching to dignity to his short person. "Dare not to pronounce that name in my hearing with disrespect. I will not permit it, ma'am, for, let me tell you, if there is a perfect being upon the face of this earth, it is my honoured employer."

"Oh, I know it too well," returned the woman, again bursting into tears, "and I have always known it, which has made my sorrow ten times greater! but fool—fool—my sorrow cannot serve him now. It is all past and done—only, sir, I wanted to tell him, that a poor, wretched sinner wished to kneel before him, and ask his forgiveness before she dies."

"This is all very extraordinary," answered Mr. Barnes, whose matter-of-fact perplexity and astonishment, contrasted strangely with the passionate enthusiasm of that poor creature beside him, in whose troubled mind, all the ordinary little observances of every day life were forgotten, in the earnestness of sorrow and remorse.

The feelings of Mr. Barnes had never been powerfully excited in his life. In all probability they were totally incapable of being so, and all passion, or enthusiasm, therefore, appeared to him absolute madness.

But he was a kind-hearted man, and understanding, at least, that his poor visitor was in great distress of mind, he was as sorry for her, as it was in his nature to be; at the same time, sincerely wishing she would think proper to depart. Not having the courage to tell her so, he turned round, and stirred the fire, and then finding she did not move, he very civilly

asked her, by what name he should speak of her to Mr. Dalton.

"Oh, that is not of the least consequence!" she abruptly replied, as she arose, and gazed in a bewildered manner around her. "I will only thank you to say, that those who tempted me were worse than I, but he shall know more before long. So good night—It is getting late, and I will call again soon, to hear what Mr. Dalton says."

"I beg your pardon—but you may spare yourself the trouble," returned Mr. Barnes, "upon my word of honour, I am all day at the office—"

"No matter," replied the woman, "I will come again in the evening, if it suits you better, for to tell you a secret, sir," and she came close up to Mr. Barnes, and laying her hand on his arm, said almost in a whisper, "I am not so afraid of you, as of Mr. Dalton, for when I think of his anger, when the child was first missing—I dare not go to him."

"Child, ma'am—what child—what does all this mean?" cried the clerk, eagerly.

"Oh, sir, the roaring of the flames was nothing to the voice of his despair! I have heard it, a hundred times in my dreams, and now it rings in my ears by day and by night, till it drives me mad. I dare not go again to him! But good night, sir, good night, sir; time presses," and she hurried from the room and the house, before Barnes had recovered from the perplexity her last words had occasioned her.

"Betty, Betty, stop her," he cried, hurrying after her into the passage; "ask her name, I must know that woman's name!"

"It is too late now, sir," said Betty, very coolly, as the street door was closed after the departed stranger, "but she must be Lucy Forrest, who lived long ago with Mr. Dalton, I am thinking."

"Yes, to be sure it must be Lucy Forrest! What a fool I was not to think of that before!" cried the worthy man. "And

what will Mr. Seaton say, when he hears she has been here, and I have let her escape again, in this way, without learning where she is to be found? Oh, Betty, cannot you run after her."

"She is at the bottom of the street before this," answered the house-keeper, very coolly, "and I don't know what you can be thinking of, sir, to send me running in the rain after a mad woman at this time of night."

"True, Betty, true! it is very late, and it rains very hard," said Mr. Barnes, "I wonder what can have become of Mr. Charles."

"He might have more consideration, than to keep people out of their beds, at this time of night," muttered Mrs. Betty, as she returned, in no very amiable humour, to the kitchen.

Mr. Barnes, who was accustomed to think of very little but what regarded the business in which he had all his life been engaged, was now completely perplexed

and bewildered by such an unusual interruption of his ordinary tranquil habits of life. When he once more found himself alone, he heaved a deep sigh, as if an enormous weight had been removed from his heart, and then again took up his violoncello, and sought by its friendly tones to re-establish, as soon as possible, his ordinary peaceful humour.

The rain continued to fall in torrents, and sometimes as the stormy east wind bore it with violence against his window, so as to be audible even in the midst of his performance, he thought with some uneasiness and regret, of the poor, forlorn creature, whom he had allowed to go forth again in her thin and miserable garments, in such an inclement night.

At last twelve o'clock struck, and he became seriously uneasy, that Charles Seaton had not returned. He ordered his old house-keeper to bed, after she had made up the fire, and then lighting a fresh pair of candles, he sat down to look over

his yearly account book, and with a resolute feeling of heroic self-sacrifice, declared his determination to sit up, and wait for his guest's return, even should he not appear till morning.

CHAPTER III.

Such smiling rogues
Like rats oft bite the holy cords in twain
Too intrinsic to unloose * * * *
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness
Harbour more craft and far corrupter ends
Than twenty silky ducking observants.

Shakespere.

CHARLES SEATON had been detained that day in the office of Mr. Vernon by a variety of circumstances, which combined to prolong his occupations there beyond the usual hour.

His ordinary work had, in the morning, been interrupted by a long consultation

with the solicitor concerning his recent discoveries, and the use to be made of them; and in the afternoon Mr. Vernon placed a box of papers before him, saying at the same time, that he should feel obliged if he would look through them, and arrange them that evening, as they related to the affairs of a Mr. Parker, a deceased merchant, and he had to appear in court concerning them on the following day.

As Charles Seaton always worked in a small room alone, where he was entirely undisturbed, he promised to fulfil the wishes of his employer, even though he might be obliged to sit up all night to do so.

For several hours he continued to read various letters, and from time to time to make such extracts as he judged necessary, without any paper of peculiar interest falling into his hands.

There are few things more strongly prove with what petty interests, futile projects, and worthless ideas, the lives of most men

are worn away, than such a collection of the papers of the dead, where the daily feelings and events are unconsciously registered, and yet, scarcely a trace is found of aught that is worthy to be rescued from oblivion.

Here were light love letters, and invitations to parties of pleasure, in the early days of youth, of which the writers were probably all dead and gone; then followed accounts and calculations, notes of the price of stocks, railways, &c. The man of pleasure had become a man of business in his latter days, though without entirely forsaking the early habits of his life. At length, to his astonishment, Seaton recognized the hand-writing of a bundle of letters to be that of Gråves. He opened the first with considerable curiosity. It was dated before the time when he was in Mr. Dalton's bank, and requested the loan of twenty pounds, Graves confessing that, being engaged in a small speculation, such assistance would be of great service to

him. Then followed a second, acknowledging the receipt of the money with thanks.

There were several other letters on the same subject during the lapse of about three years, till it appeared that Graves had become indebted to Mr. Parker above five hundred pounds, at the time when Seaton was taken by his uncle into the bank. It appeared that Mr. Parker had pressed repeatedly for the repayment of the money. Graves replied by stating his intention of marrying Martha, and promised to remit the capital and interest with very short delay, throwing out hints about his expectations from his wife's rich uncle, Mr. Dalton. In another letter, somewhat later, he spoke of Charles himself. Insinuated that he was not to be trusted, and must if possible be got out of the office, for though unluckily Mr. Dalton was completely deceived by his hypocrisy, his eyes would be opened before long. In about a month later, he alluded to certain

small sums having been stolen from the bank, and insinuated that Charles Seaton was the thief, but it was clear from the whole correspondence that though Mr. Parker was very pressing for his money, he had received nothing till after the fire at the bank. In the copy of a letter dated a fortnight after this event, he acknowledged the receipt of three hundred pounds from Mr. Graves. He at the same time observed, it was very inconvenient to him that most of the notes were those of a Hull bank.

Seaton started with amazement as he read this observation. He distinctly remembered that the afternoon before the fire, a sum of a thousand pounds had been paid into Mr. Dalton's bank, for a vessel sold from that port to a Hull trader. He had himself counted the money, and he distinctly remembered that several hundred pounds were in Hull notes, to which Mr. Dalton objected; it was then handed over to Graves, to take the numbers, but being suddenly called away he had locked the

money into his desk. The next morning, the desk with all it had contained was consumed to ashes.

For long after Seaton had finished the perusal of these papers, he sat lost in deep thought. The villany and the falsehood, and the hypocrisy of Graves could no longer astonish him, but the wonderful chance by which these letters had fallen into his hands, so long after the occurrence of the deeds to which they related, impressed him with a deep and awful feeling of the mysterious power of Providence, which holds watch over the destinies of man.

Even after he had concluded the task entrusted to him, he tarried above an hour at the office, in the hope of seeing Mr. Vernon that night, and being able to inform him of the discovery he had made. But he did not return, as he had promised, and when the town clocks struck ten, Seaton gave up all hopes of his coming till the morrow, and locking up his papers, set off on his return home.

The night, as we have already said, was stormy and wet, and the streets through which he passed, were nearly deserted. Near the Assembly Rooms alone there was a considerable bustle, and he could scarcely make his way between the line of carriages drawing up in succession to the door, to set down various parties of ladies and gentlemen in fancy dresses, to join the ball, already commenced in the lighted ball-rooms above.

In defiance of wind and weather, more than a dozen poor people were assembled round the portico, to catch a glimpse of the gay figures hurrying to the scene of festivity. Some were lost in wonder and admiration of the different costumes; others laughed bitterly at men and women making such fools of themselves, and many a rude joke was passed.

At length a lady appeared, quite alone, who eclipsed all who had gone before, by the splendour of her attire. It was Martha Graves in the character of Anne Boleyn.

"How beautiful!" cried the curate's kitchen-maid.

"She is the finest of all! She'd be a beauty if she was not so fat," added others of the same class.

"She is just like a play actor," cried an old fish woman from the Quay.

"Less contented her, when she washed her mother's dishes," rejoined an old beggar-man, who had travelled the county for years, and was well versed in all its scandal. "Where is your cousin Seaton, Martha Graves? Tell us that. Fine times for such upstart folks as you."

The banker's lady, compelled to tarry whilst her laced footman released her velvet train from the steps of the carriage, heard the whole of these remarks, and with burning cheeks, and swelling heart, she escaped into the lobby, and made her way to the ball-room.

But there no triumph, as she had anticipated, awaited her. Of all her numerous acquaintance, not one came forward to

meet her with friendly greeting. Those whom she addressed, answered her with evident coldness and embarrassment, and withdrew to another part of the room, as soon as ordinary politeness permitted. She, who was accustomed to find herself surrounded by flatterers, was absolutely left to sit alone, during the greatest part of that evening, and to endure the agony of being a mark for the stolen and expressive glances of many friendly groups, and disdainful passers-bye, with whom she was evidently the principal subject of conversation.

She could by no means imagine what could have occasioned this sudden change in the conduct of her acquaintance and professed friends towards her; but it was too marked to be the mere effect of accident. She feared some commercial calamity had befallen her husband, and her uncertainty as to the truth made her sufferings yet more severe. Arrayed in al the finery it had cost her days of anxiety

and trouble to invent and procure, she could have wept for mortification and anger.

Gladly would she have returned home, long before the usual hour, but her carriage had not arrived, and the saucy Mrs. Graves was compelled to witness the triumph of Lady Giles and her set, and to endure, in the public eye, the bitter torture of their undisguised disdain and mockery till the grey light of morning gleamed through the windows, and to assume the appearance of composure, whilst mortification and rancour were festering in her heart.

Charles Seaton had heard the observations made by the crowd on Mrs. Graves, and grieved to see that one of the playfellows of his childhood had thus, perverted by luxury, mistaken the real road to happiness, he sadly continued his way. In the neighbouring streets he found, as he advanced, all as still and silent as if no portion of the population of the town were

still astir, and turning night into day by way of amusement.

In one long thoroughfare, only one light was visible, except that of the lamps. It was that of a gin-shop, and he paused before the window, when he reached it, to observe the miserable, lost, degraded creatures who came, even at that late hour, to purchase, perhaps with their last half-penny, the dangerous poison that was doled out within. Some were evidently habitual and ruined drinkers, reduced by this fearful habit to the lowest degree of reckless vice and poverty. Others, less advanced in the pernicious practice, seemed as if driven by misfortune to seek a short oblivion of their cares; some drank for pleasure, some from pain, but destruction alike awaited all. The coachmen and footmen from the carriages at the assembly-rooms soon came to swell the company around this shop of depravity; and with sorrowful reflections on the state of morals in our large towns, and the manner in

which health and life are wasted, both by rich and poor in the pursuit of vain and destructive pleasures, Charles Seaton pursued his way. He well knew by his experience in a penal colony how fearfully the toleration of gin-shops contributes to the commission of crime.

He was, before long, conscious that he was followed by some one whose steps kept pace with his own, and as this continued after he had passed through several streets, he could not help supposing it was with intention.

Whenever he looked back, he saw a middle-sized man, in ordinary attire, and carrying a cotton umbrella, at about ten paces behind him. Suddenly this person quickened his steps, came up to his side, touched his hat, and said, in a respectful voice —

"Mr. Seaton, if I am not mistaken; I beg your pardon, sir, but I should be glad to speak a few words with you."

"The time and place you have chosen,

are somewhat strange," replied Charles, without slackening his pace.

"The business, sir, on which I am employed, is also strange," answered the man with the utmost coolness, "and if you would step into a house, five minutes walk from hence, I think you will hear enough to convince you, that caution was very necessary."

"If you have anything to say to me, you can say it just as safely here, without danger of being overheard," answered Seaton. "There is not a creature astir except ourselves.

"That is very true, sir, but I am not the principal in this business. A gentleman has sent me, who would be glad to speak to you in private. He has some strange things to tell you, which it will be greatly to your interest to hear. There is no danger, sir. You need not be in the least alarmed. Our intentions towards you, are, I assure you, perfectly friendly,"

"Very likely, but how am I to be sure of that?"

"What harm could we do you, sir?" asked the man simply. "We very well know you are not rich enough to be worth robbing, and people don't risk their own lives for nothing."

"Where do you wish me to accompany you?" inquired Seaton, in reply, for he fully felt the truth of this simple reasoning, and being at all times fearless, he determined, at least, to satisfy his curiosity, as to the import of this midnight interview.

"Close by, sir, if you will follow me; we shall be there, sir, in five minutes," said the man.

"Lead on then," replied Charles, and his new acquaintance passed before him, into a steep narrow street, leading down to the river, in the most busy and commercial part of the town. He proceeded about half way down it, and the black mud under foot, and the rain pouring from the projecting spouts and roofs of the houses,

rendered the walk far from agreeable. The man then suddenly stopped before a house door, and pushing it open begged Seaton to enter the passage, to which it gave admission. A lamp was here burning, in the light of which, the clean stone floor and sanded staircase were clearly visible. From the whole appearance of the place, and the very strong smell of tobacco, beer, and brandy and water, Seaton rightly conjectured that he had been brought to a public house, frequented by sailors and countrymen on a market day.

He heard voices singing on the ground floor, but as they ascended the staircase, they found everything orderly and still in the upper part of the house.

"This way, sir, if you please?" said the guide, and he opened the door of a back room on the first floor.

"Have you found him, Smith?" demanded a man's voice eagerly, from within, before Seaton, dazzled by the light of two

candles on a table, could distinguish who had spoken.

"Walk in, sir," said his guide, without making other reply, and Seaton complying with this invitation, found himself in a very comfortable room, in the presence of a man very respectably dressed, and with the appearance of a clerk in some office.

Though he requested Seaton very civilly to take a chair, there was something bold, and far from prepossessing in his countenance, not to be concealed by an assumed smile; it was Mr. Barton of the Savings' Bank.

"I beg your pardon, for giving you so much trouble," he began, as he took his seat directly opposite his visitor. "We have hitherto not been personally acquainted, Mr. Seaton, and perhaps at present you will excuse me disclosing my name, till we come to something lik an understanding with each other."

"You appear, nevertheless, to be perfectly acquainted with mine," answered

Seaton, with a feeling of the coldest reserve and mistrust.

"Perfectly, perfectly, and with your whole history," was the reply. "Excuse me, sir, I mean no reproach! I am perfectly persuaded you have been very hardly used indeed—and you must be indignant at being made the victim of such hypocrisy, and villany. Were I in your situation, sir, my heart would burn to take revenge. Ay revenge—a signal revenge—on the man who, you must feel, has been the cause of all your disgrace and your sufferings."

"You are very kind to take such an interest in the affairs of an entire stranger," answered Seaton, "but I am not in the habit of discussing my private concerns with persons of whose name even I am ignorant."

"Very true—very true—the rule is a good rule, but there are exceptions," answered the spruce Mr. Barton, "but I think I may presume to say, your affairs are not

private but public affairs. There is not a beggar in the street, that does not know your history, sir."

"I am much obliged to you for this assurance, sir," returned Seaton, manfully struggling to conceal how much his feelings were wounded by the vulgar audacity of the man who thus addressed him; "but allow me to add that, if this be all the information you have to give me, you might have spared yourself, and me, the trouble of bringing me here, on such a stormy night as this.'

"But that is not all I have to tell you, sir," answered Barton, with an involuntary increase of respect, "or certainly I should not have given you so much trouble; but, having heard of your return, and presuming that your first endeavour would be to establish proofs of your innocence; and it being in my power to render you, in this respect, very essential service, I sought an early opportunity of talking the matter over with you in privacy and secrecy. The

most convincing proof of your innocence, I need scarcely say, sir, will be to prove another guilty of the crime, for which you have suffered. Have you no suspicions of the real criminal, may I ask ?"

Seaton at once felt that these questions might be a snare to learn his intentions, and very coolly replied, that suspicions were not to be uttered on such a subject.

"But facts, sir—damning facts!" answered Barton, eagerly watching the effect of his words.

"May I inquire against whom ?"

"Against our wealthy townsman, Mr. Graves," was the reply, and the speaker's smile of bitter malice did not escape the observation of Seaton. "I have him in my power—absolutely in my power—and you have only to agree to certain conditions, and your revenge shall be complete."

"Pray, allow me to inquire what may be your conditions."

"If you knew my name, sir, you would at once understand, that I cannot afford to serve you for nothing," answered the clerk, with a somewhat embarrassed manner. "Would serve you gladly, if I possibly could, without fee or reward; but I cannot afford to offend Mr. Graves for nothing. The risk is too great. I must live, sir; and as your interest will be so materially served by my evidence, really, sir, I must be paid handsomely if I bring this man to ruin, from whom I derive my present livelihood."

"You are, then, dependent on Mr. Graves, I am to understand."

"Absolutely—entirely—I have been so long—and if he had treated me decently, I would never have said a word against him, though things have come to my knowledge, during the management of his affairs which are enough to hang him. I begin to be alarmed, sir—considerably alarmed! And I tell you candidly, it is time that I should think seriously of the future."

"So you expect me to pay for your evidence? May I ask what sum you demand?"

"On that point we will speak further another time," was the reply. "Perhaps, a thousand pounds would not be too much if I could prove that a part of the money stolen from the bank has been long, and still is, in the possession of Mr. Graves?"

"The sum is considerable," answered Seaton, who felt no confidence in a man, who thus openly confessed his own base ingratitude, and sought to sell the master he had served. "Before I can make any engagements, I must know with whom I am in treaty. I will consider what has passed, and you shall shortly hear from me, if I think it worth attending to."

"You are cautious, sir!" rejoined Barton. "Perhaps you have no ready money at your command; but if your innocence is fully proved, no doubt your relations would readily pay me the sum I require."

"Your demand is very considerable,"

repeated Seaton, fixing a searching glance on his companion, "and I must tell you, that I can give you little hope of my risking such a sum for information that may be of no importance whatever."

Barton was evidently surprised and dismayed by this reply. He drank once or twice from a glass of brandy and water; he arranged his neckcloth—and then added, after an embarrassed pause, "Well then sir, you cannot object to five hundred?"

"I object, as I before told you, to any kind of engagement, with a man of whom I know nothing, but that he has acknowledged that he is in the employment of Mr. Graves, whom he wishes to betray."

"Agree to five hundred, and you shall know my name directly, sir," persisted Barton, following Mr. Seaton to the door, but he paid no further attention to him, than by coolly replying, "You have my answer. If you have anything to say openly, let it be addressed to Mr. Vernon, who can best judge of the value of your

communications. I wish you good evening."

He then left Mr. Barton in consternation and dismay, and descending to the street, again turned his steps towards the dwelling of Mr. Barnes.

Disgusted by the means which had been used to entrap him, disgusted by the low cunning and duplicity of the man who had confessed himself ready to sell his employer and benefactor in the hour of adversity, his honest pride revolted at the idea of becoming a partner in such a vile bargain, and he at once resolved to depend on the open, disinterested evidence of old Molly, and such as might yet be obtained by straightforward means, and not to contaminate a good cause by bribery, corruption and treachery.

Animated by this noble resolution, he felt as if he had cast off a heavy weight from his breast, and well assured that God abideth only with the just and true, he spurned all dark and crooked ways to justice.

CHAPTER IV.

Ruffians are abroad,
And the first larum of the cock's shrill throat
May prove a trumpet summoning your ear
To horrid sounds of hostile feet within.
E'en daylight has its danger.

COWPER.

Poor Mr. Barnes was still sitting beside his fire, awaiting with brave resolution, considerable drowsiness, and ever increasing wonder, the return of Charles Seaton, when, about twelve o'clock, he was suddenly aroused by a loud knock at the street door.

Though he eagerly hurried to open it,

supposing that no one could be there at such an hour, but his long expected guest, he failed not, however, to assure himself of that fact, before he withdrew the bolts. To his indescribable astonishment, his eager inquiry was not answered by the voice of Charles Seaton, but by that of the workman, James Carr.

Full of apprehension of some new and unknown evil, he hastily admitted this unexpected visitor.

"In the name of fortune, what brings you here at this time of night, my good fellow," he cried, eagerly, as soon as Carr had entered.

"I have come for Mr. Seaton," was the hasty reply. "I must speak to him directly."

"Then you must first find out where he is," said Mr. Barnes. "He has not been in this house to-night."

"Not here, sir!" cried Carr, in amazement.

"No, not here! can't say, upon my

word, what has become of him! never sat up a whole night in my life before; strange business, James Carr—very strange business. But what do you want with him?"

"Where do you think I am likely to find him?" replied the workman, without appearing to have heard the old gentleman's last inquiry.

"Cannot say, upon my word. He has never been here since dinner yesterday. But what is the matter, James Carr, that brings you here to seek for him, at such an untimely hour, when all honest people ought to be in their beds. What can be the matter?"

"Matter enough, sir," answered the man. "The whole world is going mad, I think. I would fain prevent bloodshed, if it were possible; and as I knew no one so likely to help me, as Mr. Seaton, I just came to ask him to go with me. But, as you say, sir, it is very strange, that he has not come home yet, such a terrible wet night as this."

"Very strange, indeed, James! you are right there. But what did you say about bloodshed? You do not mean, that the men are really so mad as to take up arms? They cannot be such fools as to think of fighting, when there are regular soldiers to fire their cannons at them; and they don't know how many of them may be shot like sparrows, in less than ten minutes?"

"It is hard to say what may happen, sir," was Carr's reply; "if prompt measures are not taken to bring the poor fellows to reason. But where do you think I am likely to hear anything of Mr. Seaton?"

"But you don't really think they will come, actually, to cannonading, and plundering and burning, and all that kind of thing?" demanded poor Mr. Barnes, in terrible consternation, without at all heeding the last question.

"Who can say, Sir, when a storm once breaks loose, where and how it may end."

"I cannot stay here then, all alone!" exclaimed the old gentleman. "Mercy on me, James, the outskirts of the town will be exposed to the first attack! I shall be shot, perhaps, in my own parlour! It is too shocking to think of! I shall be safer down at the office, that is quite clear."

"Cannot say, sir, upon my word," answered the workman, with a slight smile. "But I don't think you need alarm yourself to-night, at all events. Matters wont come to an outbreak yet awhile. Not till to-morrow, that is certain, as far as I can learn. And so, sir, if you can tell me nothing more about Mr. Seaton, I must be going, for I have no time to lose."

"No, James, not a word more, I am very sorry to say. It is the first night he has ever staid from home, and I think it very extraordinary indeed. I really begin to fear he may have been shot, or something of that sort, or, perhaps, still worse, joined the rebels."

"There has been no firing yet; and, I

think, sir, we need have no fear of Mr. Charles's taking part with rioters," said Carr, laughing. "I wish you good night; and if I cannot find him, I must try what is to be done without him."

Then touching his hat, the workman hastily left the house, and strode with rapid steps down the little garden.

"James Carr—James Carr," cried Mr. Barnes, as he disappeared in the darkness. "You have told me nothing, absolutely nothing. What do you want with Mr. Seaton? Oh, mercy, mercy, what am I to do here, alone by myself, and a rebellion going to break out! He has gone away, and given me no explanations, and we may all be murdered before morning, for anything I know to the contrary. But I will make haste, and bar the door, at any rate."

This task the good man speedily performed, and then wiping the cold perspiration from his forehead, he returned into his little parlour more perplexed and anx-

ious than he had ever been in his life before. Sleep had entirely forsaken him, and he now actually thought of calling up his old housekeeper to keep him company and beguile the time. But his fears of her scolding and ill-humour were even greater than his terrors of rebellion and bloodshed, and he heroically resolved to support the burthen of his anxieties alone.

Nor were Mr. Barnes's fears for himself unmingled with serious apprehensions for the fate of Charles Seaton. The attachment of the solitary old man, to the more youthful companion of his earlier years, had been greatly strengthened since he had taken him under his roof.

He felt for him almost the affection of a father to a son, and it had warmed and expanded his heart to find in his old age, an object for his love. When his terror allowed him to think more tranquilly of the many causes which might have occasioned Charles Seaton's absence, it occurred to him that it was more likely he had been

detained by some of the evil machinations of Mr. Graves, than by any circumstances connected with the disturbances of the workmen.

But, if possible, this increased his anxiety for the safety of his friend, and he impatiently counted the hours, as the night advanced, having resolved to go as early as possible in the morning, to consult with Miss Dalton on the subject.

He made up his fire—he again sat down beside it—for he felt very chilly—and very uncomfortable, and he began to think if, after all, it would not be better to go to bed, when he was suddenly aroused by the clatter of a detachment of cavalry passing in quick trot before his house. He started up—unclosed the window shutters—and poked his head out of the window, just in time to ascertain that soldiers were actually riding down the street, and then, with a feeling of indescribable consternation, he made all fast again, and began to

pace up and down his little parlour with his hands behind his back.

The conviction forced on him by this unusual occurrence, that there was mischief going on somewhere, excited his terrors in the highest degree. He had a horror of the idea of fighting and bloodshed, a yet greater of being himself involved by some means or another, in the disastrous consequences of any serious disturbances, and his blood ran cold when a second party of dragoons clattered along the street.

But Mr. Barnes did not venture, this time, to look out. He felt fully convinced that a battle was going on somewhere, and a sensation as if balls were whizzing around his head completely stupified him for some minutes. He now no longer doubted that Charles Seaton had been detained by some serious accident, and his apprehensions for his safety became almost insupportable. He expected every moment to hear the discharge of musketry, or the roar of cannon

—but no such ominous sounds broke the stillness of the night.

The rain ceased, at length, and the noiseless tranquillity of the night, which was only broken by the chiming of the clock in the neighbouring church, might have re-assured the most timid, when, as suddenly as before, the repose was again broken, in an equally unusual manner.

The heavy steps of a man running up the street with breathless haste were first audible—then followed two or three persons together—then more than a dozen, who uttered broken sentences of encouragement to each other, as they passed by.

Connected with the state of feeling in the neighbourhood, these circumstances would have alarmed even more courageous persons than Mr. Barnes, but when after a pause of five minutes, the cavalry returned at a rapid pace from the direction to which they had previously gone, evidently in pursuit of the fugitives, the poor old

gentleman threw himself back in an easy chair, in a complete agony of despair, holding both his hands upon his ears to shut out the sounds he dreaded must inevitably follow.

But as no further disturbances ensued, the good man in this position unconsciously fell asleep, and he was snoring very loudly when his house-keeper came into the room, about seven o'clock in the morning, to light his fire which had totally expired.

When aroused by the noise of her labours, he was at first perfectly astonished to find himself already dressed, and out of bed, and yet more so, when in answer to his eager enquiries for Charles Seaton, he learnt that he had not yet returned.

With the utmost expedition he made his toilet, and, having swallowed his breakfast with unusual celerity, he declared his intention of visiting Miss Dalton before he went to the office. The old house-keeper, who had quietly slept during the whole night, and listened to all her master's

stories about rebels and soldiers, with the utmost incredulity, was for the first time convinced that something extraordinary had occurred, when Mr. Barnes made such a wonderful exception to the rules which had regulated his daily movements during the forty years they had passed under the same roof. She brushed his coat with more alacrity than usual, and secretly resolved to go directly after his departure to enquire into the truth of his stories from the proprietor of a small grocer's shop in the next street, whose narratives she was at all times much more ready to believe than those of her master.

Poor Mr. Barnes saw many things to increase his anxiety as he proceeded to Grace Dalton's, but he neither stopped nor questioned any one, for he was already late, and feared that his visit would delay him longer than was compatible with his duties at Mr. Dalton's office. In spite of all his haste, the ladies had finished their early breakfast before the old gentleman

reached their lodging, and Amy Seaton, who was now as well known as her cousin Grace amongst the poor, and had no fears when going alone as the dispenser of her charity, had gone out to carry a bundle of work to a school in the neighbourhood of Molly Temple's cottage.

Miss Dalton was both astonished and alarmed when she first learnt the extraordinary absence of Seaton, whilst the apprehensions of Mr. Barnes were increased on hearing that he had not spent the last evening with his cousins as usual. Though he did not wish to alarm, he could not help throwing out hints about Graves, which the more affected Miss Dalton, as they found a responding suspicion in her own breast. Then again, his account of James Carr's visit in the dead of the night, and the passage of the soldiers, excited other fears.

It was in vain that she inquired of the people of the house concerning the occurrences of the past night. The men had

already left home, and the women knew nothing. Her anxiety was now wrought to the highest pitch, and she decided to go at once to James Carr's to ascertain, if, after he had left Mr. Barnes's, he had succeeded in discovering any traces of Mr. Seaton.

The worthy clerk would gladly have offered to accompany her, but it wanted only a quarter of an hour to the time when he was accustomed to take his place at his desk in Mr. Dalton's coal office, and if he had been offered a hundred pounds he would not have absented himself without first obtaining leave of absence. Yet to allow the lady to go alone in the present agitated state of the town, appeared equally impossible, and between his politeness and his sense of order, he was in a terrible perplexity.

But Grace, who, in spite of his reports, had no apprehension whatever of encountering either dangers or difficulties, insisted on his immediately leaving her, and pro-

mised to send a messenger to him as soon as she obtained any certain information with regard to Charles Seaton. Mr. Barnes thanked her and prepared to leave her—not, however, without considerable anxiety that she and Amy should both be abroad without any protector, when he felt certain that disturbances existed somewhere; and if the truth were told, a little mortified that Miss Dalton appeared to give no more weight and consideration to his nocturnal adventures than his housekeeper had before done. But just as he was about to leave the house the landlord returned from the town, and, to his infinite triumph and satisfaction, brought all kinds of reports about riots and insurrections—which, if they had not yet actually taken place, were hourly apprehended.

The soldiers, he said, had been in motion during the greatest part of the night; a plot had been discovered for burning down the town; and some said the chiefs had been arrested—whilst others insisted that

they had all escaped ; and it was the general opinion that, if the military were not speedily reinforced, very serious misfortunes were inevitable.

"You see, all I told you was quite right —perfectly right—though I know you did not believe a word of it, till my testimony was confirmed, Miss Dalton!" cried Mr. Barnes, with considerable exultation and increase of self-importance, when he heard this intelligence. "But I am truly distressed I must leave you alone at so critical a time, to go to the office. I am, upon my word. Stay at home, do, dear Miss Dalton. If anything happens to you, I shall never forgive myself, as long as I live."

"Thank you," she replied, "I am not at all afraid ; but, if there really were danger, I must go in search of Amy, and bring her home—for the part of the town where she has gone, is most likely to be the scene of disturbances. But don't alarm yourself about me, Mr. Barnes ; neither the soldiers

nor the rebels, I feel quite sure, will do me any harm."

"Don't be too certain of that Ma'am," returned the old gentleman, shaking his head woefully, as he once more pulled out his watch. "Only ten minutes, upon my honour! I must run for it, or Mr. Dalton will be at the office before me. Good-bye, ma'am. Hope you excuse my want of gallantry—but cannot do otherwise, though I am grieved—distressed—but pray keep out of the way of flying balls."

And with this parting injunction, the good man hastened down stairs in even greater anxiety than he arrived.

Though Grace Dalton had maintained an appearance of courage and composure in the presence of Mr. Barnes, her trouble at the unaccountable absence of Seaton was very great. True love has many fears; and a thousand ideas of dangers occurred to her mind, though she would have blushed to confess the extent of her weakness.

Nor was she without serious uneasiness on Amy's account—for, though she had much trust and confidence in the gratitude and kind intentions of the poor people amongst whom the young girl was gone, she felt persuaded that if any disturbances did occur, they would first break out amongst the workmen of Mr. Graves, to several of whom she intended, that morning, to carry the weekly allowance, which Grace had, for some time past, contributed to alleviate the sufferings of the most afflicted and destitute.

Miss Dalton, therefore, prepared herself for walking, with all possible celerity, and only a few moments had elapsed, after Mr. Barnes's departure, when she likewise left the house.

Though the sun was clear, and the air was fresh and balmy after the rain of the past night, they had no longer their usual cheering influence on her mind. Deep trouble and anxiety were in her heart, for those dearest to her upon earth, and now,

when the events of the night had become generally known, the public uneasiness manifested itself in many ways, which added to her uneasiness as she passed along the streets.

Little knots of idle workmen were gathered whispering together at the ends of the narrow alleys, and at the corners of the thoroughfares; women of the lower orders were talking loudly and passionately before their doors, more especially when a dragoon at full gallop passed bye. In the shops were no customers, and their owners lounging at the doors, eagerly questioning the passengers. Gentlemen seldom seen abroad at that early hour of the morning, were sauntering slowly along, arm in arm, in deep and earnest discourse, and on the face of every one, fear and anxiety were legibly expressed. All these signs and tokens impressed a conviction forcibly on the mind of Grace, as she hurried along, that some great public calamity was at hand. She felt that she was not alone in

her terrors and her anxiety, but that hundreds had equal cause for apprehension with herself, and a heavy weight oppressed her heart, when she thought, that perhaps even on the morrow, the present fears of the peaceful inhabitants of the town might be converted into lamentation and mourning.

But Grace Dalton met with no personal molestation, as she proceeded on her way. All seemed too busily engaged with their own affairs, and their own feelings, to take any heed of her, as she passed.

Uncertain where she should find Amy, she proceeded first to the cottage of James Carr, trusting that she might there learn some tidings of Seaton. Her consternation was great, when she found that the wife of the workman was in scarcely less anxiety than herself, as her husband had been abroad the whole night, and had not yet returned home.

Mrs. Carr confirmed all that Grace had previously heard, as to the disturbed state

of the neighbourhood, and she implored her, not to venture into the quarter inhabited by Mr. Graves's people, all of whom, she said, were off work. But the lady's anxiety on Amy's account left her no choice.

The school the young girl had proposed visiting that morning was near the dwelling of Molly Temple, whither she had said she intended likewise to go; and Miss Dalton now determined to proceed in quest of her, to both of these places, without further delay.

Mrs. Carr offered very kindly to accompany her, but Grace well knowing, from her own feelings, how anxious this poor woman must be, to obtain the earliest possible intelligence of her absent husband, she insisted on her remaining at home to await his return, and again set off alone in quest of Amy.

CHAPTER V.

Let us look the evil, then, boldly in the face; for thus only can we estimate the magnitude of the remedies required.

Anonymous.

AFTER Seaton's interview with Mr. Barton, he proceeded with all speed towards the dwelling of his worthy friend Mr. Barnes. The rain had ceased, and as he passed over a piece of waste ground near the outskirts of the town, the moon shone at intervals between the broken clouds, making visible the gloomy solitude of the wet and misty scene.

Long, dark shadows fell from several half-built houses, across the path, and the wind moaned fitfully through their skeleton walls. In some countries he might have felt well-grounded apprehensions, whilst passing on such a night through this desolate neighbourhood, which was well calculated for the temporary concealment of thieves and vagabonds; but notwithstanding the distress and the discontent prevailing throughout the district, Seaton had too much confidence in the moral character of his poor countrymen, to have any dread of robbery or personal molestation.

Before he had half passed this broken ground, he saw at a little distance a tall man rapidly approaching him, but even at this hour of the night, and it was near one o'clock, this caused him no apprehension. When they were within a few yards of each other, the stranger cried out in a sharp, quick tone—

"Who goes there?"

And Seaton's surprise was great, when he recognized the voice of James Carr.

"Charles Seaton!" he answered, "but in the name of fortune, Carr, what brings you here at such an hour?"

"I have been to Mr. Barnes's in search of you," replied the workman. "I must speak with you, sir, and that without delay."

"What has happened, my good fellow?"

"This is no place for explanations," returned Carr. "Perhaps we had better go back to Mr. Barnes's, for I left him in a terrible fright on your account."

"That would only be to lose time, if your business is pressing," said Seaton, eagerly, "and I presume it must be so, or I should not meet you here, at this hour of the night. Explain yourself at once, there is no one likely to overhear us in such a place, and at such an hour."

"I am not so sure of that," was the reply. "There are more people astir to-

night, than honest folks dream of. But there is, as you say, sir, no time to be lost, and you must come at once with me, Mr. Charles, and try to prevent mischief."

"Where, and in what way?"

"You know, sir, there was a meeting of the pitmen yesterday on the North Common; more than five thousand I hear, came together. I did what I could to keep our men away, and such is their love and respect for Mr. Dalton, that very few went; but to-night, there is a secret meeting of Graves's workmen, to concert their future plans with the pitmen from the county and the neighbourhood; and there are more than a dozen of our people have promised to be there, to meet the deputation. I don't like it, sir, I tell you plainly, and it is downright ingratitude to a master who has always treated them like Christian brethren."

"Perhaps they are only going out of curiosity," said Seaton.

"I hope so, sir, but even that is wrong.

It gives a bad example. They have not dared to tell me what was going on, but old Molly seems to know more about their proceedings than she chooses to say."

"Molly Temple do you mean?"

"Yes. She came to my cottage after we were fast asleep to-night, and knocked us up. She said there was mischief astir, and I must bring you down to her, without delay, when she would tell you all about it, for you would know better than anybody else what was best to be done. She then told me that our people were on the point of joining the rebels, and she was afraid there would be bloodshed before long."

"Where is she?" demanded Seaton, in a voice of anxiety.

"She came back to wait for me in her own house, which is nearer than my cottage; and if you will turn down the lane with me we shall be there in five minutes."

"Let us lose no time," was Charles's only reply.

"Then follow me, sir," said Carr, and

without uttering a word more, he hurried with long strides down a lane on the right, and across a part of the adjoining common, towards a little group of low cottages, the dark outlines of which were soon visible against the sky, on the verge of the open ground.

A light gleamed from the small casement of one of these humble dwellings, and towards this Carr silently directed his steps. The door was opened even before they reached it, and old Molly, having heard the sound of their approaching footsteps in the stillness of the night, stood impatiently awaiting them on the threshold.

"Come in, sirs—come in; we must be careful not to wake the neighbours," she whispered. "Just be as quiet as you can till I have made all fast."

She did not utter another word till she had carefully closed and bolted the door after the entrance of her visitors.

"Now, Mr. Seaton," she said, when all

was secured, "I have no time to make apologies; but I must just tell you, an hour has come when you must show your courage and your spirit. I have learnt from Ralph Innes—a pit lad who lodges with me—that the rebels are to have a meeting to-night, at a lodging-house, for vagrants and such like, which stands alone by the road-side, about a quarter of a mile from here. A deputation has come from the country, with two Methodist-preachers and four of the ringleaders, to agree upon their plans with Mr. Graves's workmen, and to try and get hold of Mr. Dalton's; but I hope only a few of them will listen to them, for they can get nothing by it, that's certain. Graves's workmen may want to take revenge on him, like enough, and it is little matter what harm they do such a rascal as he is; but I cannot bear to think of the trouble these poor deluded creatures will bring themselves and their starving families into."

"But how is this to be helped, Molly, if

they are determined on setting the laws at defiance?" enquired Seaton.

"Somebody must just go and try to make them listen to reason," said the old woman. "One works on another till their rage makes them all blind together; but perhaps, if a friend spoke the truth, they might be quieted again. I would have gone and brought Mr. Dalton amongst them, for it is sure and certain the worst would not have dared to lay a finger upon him; but his mind has been much troubled lately, they say, and the agitation might be the death of him. But you, Mr. Charles, can talk as well as he can to them, if you will."

"But if they knew me, not one would listen to a convict's words," answered Seaton, bitterly.

"They don't know you," returned Molly; "and at all events, James Carr can go in the first, and call you if he wants your help. If you can only contrive to learn what is going on, and what they decide

upon doing, it is always something at such a moment."

"But it is not likely that they will let us in among them," said Seaton gravely.

"The boy has promised to open the door when Carr knocks in a certain manner," was the old woman's reply.

"Do they meet in the house?"

"No; in a loft over a stable at the back of it; and there is a part divided off at the end, where we can mount from the outside by a ladder. The boy says they have had two meetings within the last week, and each time they have sent him into the inner loft, to see that no one was there to listen to their proceedings. He has promised that when he goes in to-night, he will withdraw the bolts of the door above the ladder. But we must be away quickly, for you have been so long in coming, that no doubt they are all there by this time."

"Do you mean to go with us, Molly?" demanded Seaton.

"Certainly," she replied; "neither you nor Carr know the way I will take under the shadows of the hedges; and we must be very cautious. Don't speak another word as we go along, for on such nights as this, there are many ears and eyes awake."

"We can go through the plantations, perhaps," said Carr. "We cannot be seen there, at all events."

"Yes; that is the road I mean to take you," answered Molly. "It is the safest, and we can get almost close up to the back of the house, under the shadow of the bushes. The moon must be down by this time, so let us be going."

"We should have had pistols," said the workman, in a low voice.

"We are better without them, was the reply of Seaton. "We might be tempted to use them rashly."

"You are right, sir," returned Carr. "But if Molly could lend us a couple

of stout bludgeons, it might not be amiss."

"In truth can I," said the old woman, producing two well-seasoned, knotty, crab-sticks from a corner. "They belong to the boy, Ralph: and you will be wise to take them, in case of need, though, I trust, you won't want them. Now follow me."

Then, after opening and closing the door after them with extreme caution, the old woman set off at a rapid pace. They soon left the open ground and turned into a narrow path between tall hawthorn hedges, leading in a direct line to the plantations extending far along the summit of the hill.

From the heavy rain which had fallen the day before, the ground was wet and slippery; the moon, as Molly had said, had already gone to rest—but the night was cloudless and starlit, and the old woman pursued her way, even through the intricacies of the copse, with unhesitating

steps—sometimes warning her companions in a whisper, to step aside, in order to avoid a deep hole in the path—at others, directing them to stoop under some low hanging branch, as if she were as conversant in the darkness with all these obstacles as by the light of day.

"Hush, hush," she whispered, as she turned and laid her hand on Seaton's arm, when they, at length, approached the outskirts of the wood, nearest to their place of destination. "I hear the tread of their sentinel. He keeps watch before the stable door in the front. Carr, you have not forgotten what I told you? The watch word is 'Union!' When he hears that, Ralph told me he would let you pass upstairs at once; and as they have now been more than hour together, nobody will notice your coming in, or observe if there be one more or less in the loft. We must turn to the right now, and keep on in the wood, till we get at the back of the house."

"You are right," said Seaton, in the same tone; "he cannot see us then, as we cross over the little strip of field, which divides us from the building."

"And the ladder we must mount is at the back of the house," returned Molly, "but tread softly—come this way."

And stooping low, she glided under the branches, although there was no longer a path, with an agility with which her companions had great difficulty in keeping up. Their footsteps fell so softly on the mossy ground, that there was no danger of their being overheard, and the rustling of the bushes they disturbed, was lost amidst that occasioned by the passing breeze. In a few minutes they reached the point where Molly judged it advisable they should part —and Carr, going at once boldly to the front door, sought to engage the attention of the sentinel, whilst she and Seaton crossed the field behind.

All this succeeded admirably well. The sentinel was not surprised at seeing a man

approach from the cover of the wood, as all his friends had assembled mysteriously, and as secretly as possible, and Seaton and Molly reached the foot of the ladder, without having attracted the slightest attention.

The old woman with the courage and decision of a veteran leading on a party in scaling the walls of a fortress, was the first who nimbly mounted the ladder, and when she found that the bolt of the door at the top was actually withdrawn, as Ralph had promised her should be the case, she made a sign to Seaton to follow, and then stepped into the loft. The gentleman sprang up, and was at her side in a few moments.

The empty hay-loft, in which they then found themselves, was only divided by a few old boards from the place of the rioters' nocturnal assembly. It was evidently entirely full, for the loud and numerous voices in debate and contention, entirely drowned any noise inadvertently made by the secret

intruders. Innumerable cracks in the rude and dilapidated partition, not only admitted long rays of light from the adjoining granary, but enabled Seaton and his companion to see and hear all that was passing therein.

A table occupied the centre of the floor, on which several tallow candles flared and swealed in the flitting gusts, which moaned and wailed through the crevices of the old building. Above fifty men, some in their coarse working garments, others in decent Sunday clothes, and many in ragged and thread-bare attire, were gathered together in that narrow loft. Some were seated on sacks of corn, bundles of straw, old boxes, and broken benches, others were standing around the table, and all were listening attentively to a tall, middle-aged, solemn-faced Methodist preacher, who was holding forth, with enthusiastic violence, against the abomination of exorbitant profits, and the rights of labour.

It would have been impossible to have

found a spectacle more painful to a true and benevolent disciple of Christ, than this midnight assemblage of the representatives of human misery in their den of poverty, particularly, when mentally contrasted with that other assembly, called the representatives of the people in their palace at St. Stephen's.

The world bears a fair exterior, and the rich are all praising its progress, because they daily enjoy more of its luxuries, but if they would know it to the core, they must first behold such a gathering, as we have now described, of worn and half famished labourers, good, honest, peaceable, industrious men, driven by the despair of hunger and disease to consult as to the best manner of making a mad struggle for the means of existence—roused to passion by the pressure of want, and then led blindly to destruction by ambitious fanatics, dreaming of Utopias, and disseminating impracticable doctrines from the mere love of excitement and envious unrest.

In the midst of this wild company was a solitary woman; strange associate in such an assembly!

She sat almost directly opposite the spot where Charles Seaton stood, with her head resting on her crossed arms upon the table, so that her face was completely hidden. She had a crushed and tattered straw bonnet, and from under it streamed a profusion of dark brown hair, over the dirty shawl wrapped around her shoulders. They were all saturated with wet, for she had evidently been long abroad in the rain; but of that she seemed to take no heed, nor indeed of anything passing around her.

So still and motionless did she remain there amidst this noisy scene of passionate excitement, that it might have been supposed she slept, had not the convulsive movements of her attenuated frame from time to time betrayed, that she was weeping the silent, bitter tears of the heart's agony. A more pitiable example of the evil consequences of vice could not have

been found upon the face of the earth. The wreck of beauty—the withered youth —the ruined mind—all were there—united with despair in this world, and terrors beyond the grave.

When the preacher had finished his long harangue, with a sounding period about tyranny and slavery, and the rights of man, well calculated to excite the passions, if not to enlighten the reason of his hearers, a pale, thin man arose, in tattered garments, which hung loose around his hunger shrivelled limbs.

"All this is very fine, I dare say," he began, "but what we want, is work—and good wages. Now in my time I have lived through several of these rebellions, and I have never yet seen that they did us any good; but quite the contrary. Our little savings, if we had any, were all swallowed up, the clubs ruined, confidence was for long destroyed, and if we did content our anger by burning down our master's property, we did ourselves the most harm by

such violence. Some of us were put in prison, others sent out of the country, and the rest fell back into the old system, and struggled on as well as they could, till hard times came round again to drive them once more to the same mad and useless course."

"Right, right!" exclaimed a pale shoemaker, from the town, who was a disciple of the peace association. "'But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.' Make no war I tell you, 'but strive together in love, and take no thought saying what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed? but pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you.'"

"Why do such as you come here, then?" cried an iron founder of gigantic stature, who had that day only arisen from the bed, where he had lain six weeks, ill of the fever, which had robbed him both of wife and child. "We want no reasoning and

doubting," he continued, in an earnest voice. "We know very well what we have to do, and have only come here to consult, when and how it is best to be done. The fewer words the better. This rascal Graves must have a lesson. If he wont sell his corn at a reasonable price, we must take it, and there is no more to be said. The first thing to be done is to plunder the granary, and then make a bonfire of it."

"That is agreed!"

"That is plain."

"It must be done before more soldiers arrive."

"There is no time to be lost," cried several voices at once, and for a few minutes there was a wild tumult in the loft, so that nothing distinctly could be heard.

When something like order was restored, the preacher turned to the iron-founder, who had before spoken, and demanded how many of Graves's men he would engage to

bring to join those from the country, when the attack was to be made.

"Two-hundred-and-seventy," was the reply.

"Only two-hundred-and-seventy," returned the preacher, who under all his appearance of enthusiasm, was a very cool calculator. "The number is small against regular troops. But is there no chance of your persuading Dalton's men to join you?" he inquired.

"Here are two of them to answer for themselves," was the founder's reply, as he pointed out two decently-dressed men, who had hitherto stood silent and apart. The countenance of one was sad and earnest, and the other had the flushed face and leaden eye of an habitual drunkard.

"Yes, we can answer for ourselves, but for nobody else," returned the melancholy man. "I had a brother, whom Graves sent adrift, with five children, in the depth

of winter, to starve till the fever broke out. The poor fellow lies in the church-yard now, with three of his little ones, and Graves refused to give a farthing to the sufferers when living, or to bury them when dead, though my brother had worked for him from a boy. I have sworn to take revenge, and I am ready to agree to anything. I should like nothing better than to have a shot at that cold-blooded rascal Graves!"

"But will the rest of the men come with you?" demanded the preacher, eagerly.

"We can only answer for ourselves," responded the red-faced pitman. "For my part, I half repent I am here already; but Mr. Dalton is very severe, and has threatened to send me off next binding day, because I take a drop of whisky now and then."

"Must the poor have no pleasures; must all enjoyments be reserved for the rich!" cried the preacher, with a nasal

twang. "Shame on such selfish tyrants! out upon such hypocrites."

"Mr. Dalton is no tyrant! Mr. Dalton is no hypocrite," exclaimed the pitman, who had first spoken, springing up with flashing eyes from his seat on an old sack. "He is the poor man's friend! a brave and honest man, who knows what belongs to his work-people, as well as to himself. Not one of us would raise a finger against him, even if the whole country were up in rebellion. It would be as bad a crime as murdering our own father, to harm a hair of his head."

"Then what brings you here—what has brought all your companions here?" again inquired the preacher, with considerable anxiety. "We want no shuffling fellows that don't know their own minds—no milk-sops nor trimmers. But hush!" he added, in an altered voice, and then suddenly pausing to listen; "did you not hear the sentinel below give a whistle!"

In a moment, there was a profound stillness in the assembly, and all listened with evident fear for the repetition of the signal. This pause had not lasted more than a minute, when it was again broken by the sound of several persons mounting the staircase, with heavy and hurried steps.

CHAPTER VI.

"The people requires," he said, "a government, national, popular, and irremovable. Where is its base to be found? Where is it to be found? Only by going down to the bottom of the people and the country; by extracting from our national rights the great mystery of the sovereignty of all."

LAMARTINE.

CONSIDERABLE consternation might have been read upon the faces of all assembled in the loft, as the steps approached the door. Some thought it was the police, others felt some dread of being immedi-

ately fired upon by the military. When, however, the door was opened, and eight or ten stout young pitmen from Mr. Dalton's colliery alone appeared, their terrors were at once relieved, and a low murmur of satisfaction welcomed the new comers.

"We hope we don't intrude!" said a fine handsome young fellow, with a sort of bow to the assembly; "but I and my companions here heard there was to be a meeting of delegates, and we want to hear a little of what is going on. We were told there was some talk of giving Graves a lesson; and as we all know he is a rascal, we should have no objection to lend a helping hand to such a job, only we must first be sure that no harm is meant to Mr. Dalton before we can consent to take a part in the row."

"Mr. Dalton ought to thank us to the last day of his life, if we roasted that rascal Graves on the timbers of his granary!" cried a tall, thin man, who had

all the while been standing gloomily by the woman's side, but had not hitherto spoken. "Who set fire to Mr. Dalton's bank? who robbed him of his only child? who has bowed down the good man's heart with sorrow, and well nigh driven him mad with despair? Graves, Graves, I tell you! Three times Graves. Returning here, after many years of fruitless labour in a distant colony, to seek a home for my old age, I found none, of all my relations, left to welcome me, but this wretched woman," and he pointed to her, who sat beside him. "I found noue of those I knew in childhood, but this miserable ruin of a girl whom I left fair and innocent—my only sister—my only relative upon earth; and this, too, is Graves's work. She can tell you better than I, how he took advantage of her ignorance, and her vanity, to lead her on to vice. How, day by day, he poisoned her weak mind, till shame and truth were forgotten; how he triumphed over

her fall, and vilely misused her as a tool for the accomplishment of his villanous and infamous schemes; till by threats of exposure and even of death, he compelled her to give false evidence against Mr. Dalton's innocent nephew. By this black treachery Mr. Seaton had well nigh forfeited his life, and was only saved from the gallows, to pass fourteen years of fearful punishment in a penal colony, whilst Graves himself was guilty of the crimes, for which he made another suffer! Can any honest man hesitate to join with heart and hand, in teaching such a scoundrel, who has despised and set at naught every principle of morality and religion in the pursuit of filthy lucre, that justice, though sometimes delayed, is ever in the hands of the Lord! Though he has long triumphed over the weaknesses and the necessities of the poor, let him be taught that God does not turn his face away for ever, even from the humblest and most abject of his

creatures, and that for those who dare to break his sacred laws of love and mercy a day of reckoning comes for their iniquities, when they are exulting the loudest, in the triumph of their enemies and their guilty ambition. Speak Lucy —" he continued, taking the woman by the arm, "stand up before these men, who are all sufferers like ourselves, who have compassion for the wrongs of the poor, stand up, and tell them before the face of Heaven, if there is one word of untruth in all I have now related."

"Heaven have mercy, it is Lucy Forrest herself," whispered old Molly in Charles Seaton's ear, as appalled and astonished, they watched this extraordinary scene, through the crevices of the old partition with ever increasing interest.

"Hush!" returned Seaton, who feared to lose one word that was passing, "she is going to speak." But though the unfortunate creature now lifted up her head, so

as fully to display to their view, the faded features of the once beautiful Lucy Forrest, she did not utter a syllable.

There was a dead silence in the assembly, occasioned by a feeling of pity and curiosity in the hearts of all the uncultivated men there present, when she slowly arose from her seat, holding her hands tightly clasped together in an attitude of supplication, as she cast a wild and imploring glance around her. It seemed as if she sought to comprehend where she was, and wherefore she had come thither.

"Lucy," persisted her brother in a sharper tone, than when he had before spoken, and he again laid his hand on her arm, "is it true, or not, that Graves was the cause of your ruin?"

"Shame on you!" she cried, shaking off his hold impatiently, "have you nothing better to do, than to make your sister confess her own disgrace, before all these strange men. Time was, you would have revenged her dishonour—time was, you

would have paid her seducer with the weight of your horsewhip, but those days are gone. You know that she has been betrayed and ruined—that she has been hunted like a dog through the streets—that she has been worked nearly to death on a treadmill, and then left to rot in a gaol, or perish of hunger on the highways, and yet you leave the rascal who has done all this to ride about in his carriage with his fine wife, and to throw her a half-penny when he fears her reproach."

"And who has done all this?" demanded Forrest, judging it best to follow her humour in her present bewildered state.

"Graves! have I not told you a dozen times," she exclaimed impatiently. "But he had no pity on Mr. Dalton's young child, so how could I expect he would have mercy upon me. He made me swear that Charles Seaton set the bank on fire! he threatened to bring me to the gallows, if I did not obey him. Fool, fool, fool, that I was, and now I can get no revenge. Poor Charles, he has come back I know, I re-

member now that he has come back; and what are all these men doing here? did you not tell me, that they would punish Graves for his iniquity, and prove Charles Seaton's innocence? but it is too late—too late!" she murmured, and sinking back on the seat, she again hid her face and wept.

"If you have the feelings of honest men, and would save your sisters and your daughters from being ruined, abandoned, and lost like this poor creature before you, it is not too late to punish the miserable wretch who has made her what she is!" exclaimed Forrest, in a voice of indignation, as he turned to such of Mr. Dalton's workmen, as still hesitated to declare their participation in the objects of the meeting. "In fighting for your own interests and avenging this poor creature's injuries, you will also be punishing the wretch who destroyed your master's only child, who has blasted the happiness of his existence, and sent his innocent nephew to suffer fourteen years, as a convicted felon. There

is no one of you, who may not be Graves's victims to-morrow--hundreds of your comrades have died martyrs of his neglect and grasping avarice, and you are not worthy the name of men, if you allow any idle scruples to prevent your assisting, with heart and hand, to wreak a just vengeance on this heartless oppressor, and robber of the poor."

"If he was guilty of Mr. Seaton's ruin, I, for one, would gladly give him a lesson," cried a middle aged pitman, who had known Charles in his youth.

"And I—" and "I—" cried all the rest of Mr. Dalton's workmen, in chorus.

"If he set the bank on fire, it is only a proper punishment to burn down his own store houses."

"Mr. Seaton shall be revenged, and Mr. Dalton, too."

"Down with the scoundrel, his time is out;" such and similar exclamations, echoed from side to side, with ever increasing violence, had the effect of exciting the

whole assembly to a state bordering on madness. Reason had lost all power to restrain the violence, even of those whom gratitude to Mr. Dalton had longest withheld from joining in the uproar.

It was in vain that James Carr, who had entered, unperceived, endeavoured to pacify those who were best known to him; passion, and the exciting influence of associated numbers, had, for the time, obtained entire mastery over them, and hands were given, and pledges exchanged, on every side of him, as engagements to zealous participation in all the rebellious plans of the leaders, by many who were utterly ignorant, what were the real objects, or the full extent of the conspiracy.

Seaton now saw that the decisive moment was come, when even life itself must be risked, to prevent, if possible, the terrible consequences which threatened to follow this wild and tumultuous association of desperate men.

Without further hesitation, he pushed

past old Molly, who strove vainly to detain him, and pulling open the rotten old door between the lofts, he at once entered the assembly.

As his tall commanding figure stood suddenly exposed to view, the preacher, who was anxiously watching the effect of the uproar he had aided to excite, was the first to observe him.

"A spy—a spy—" he cried in consternation. "We are betrayed, given over to the enemy. Fly—fly—get down the stairs whilst there is yet time—follow me if you would escape the soldiers," and without waiting to learn more, he fled precipitately from the loft. But he fled alone. The men whom he had deluded thither, and whom he so unscrupulously deserted on the first alarm, were in too high a state of excitement to think of danger. When Seaton in a loud, firm voice, exclaimed, "Fear me not, I am a friend," though many turned, with anxious curiosity, towards him, and he was answered by a

rude clamour of innumerable voices exclaiming, "Who are you? What brings you here? What is your business with us?" he never showed any signs of fear.

"It is Charles Seaton! Charles Seaton himself!" exclaimed Lucy, starting up at the sound of his well-known voice. "It is Charles Seaton, whom I have ruined and undone! Oh, hide me, in mercy hide me from his anger!" and clinging to her brother, she crouched down at his side, to escape the dreaded wrath of him whom she had so deeply injured.

"Yes! I am Charles Seaton," returned the convict, "and I come to implore all those, who have declared themselves ready to avenge my persecutions, and the cruel injustice of which I have been made the victim, to seek no revenge for wrongs which the law can remedy, and not to be led themselves into crime in order to punish the guilty. Vengeance is a wild justice, which brings no reparation to an

honest man. You also have wrongs, you are impatient to redress! My own sufferings have taught me fully to understand the extent and magnitude of yours. But crime will not diminish them, and though blood may flow like fountains in our streets it will not better your condition. Rebellion will only serve as an excuse to those in power for withholding longer from you the redress, it is their duty to grant you, if you demand it legally."

"He is right; he is perfectly right!" cried one or two of the elders of the assembly.

"It is not the violence of an undisciplined mob, like yours, that can overturn the power of a long established, rich aristocracy like that of England!" continued Seaton, to whom all now eagerly listened. "Every armed force, which the people can bring together, must be subdued, one after another, by the force of money, and the order of an established government. There-

fore, for the love you bear yourselves and your families, I implore you, take another course!"

"What course? tell us, by what way we can secure an honest livelihood, and escape from poor rates, and the humiliation of rich men's charity?" cried several voices together, whilst many eager eyes were fixed earnestly and enquiringly upon Seaton.

"It is only by moral force, that you can obtain redress," he replied. "It is only by unanimity, that you can be morally strong. Whatever you do, it must be done after mature deliberation, and by one consent, throughout the whole country. Detached acts of violence, will, as I have told you, only retard your progress to better things."

"But our children are starving," murmured several voices at once. "It is several months since I had work!"—"Our wages are not enough to pay the wear and tear of our miserable rags, and yet we are all

day wasting in the furness fires," were the broken sentences, which burst forth on all sides.

"Labour is the lot and the duty of man!" rejoined Charles, gravely. "At labour let no man murmur."

"Then let him profit by it," cried a poor little, half-famished pitman, at the further end of the room.

"And there have been times when you have largely profitted by it," answered Seaton. "My good fellows," he continued, "it is not by flattering your passions, or the natural irritation under which you are now labouring, that I can do you any good. I must tell you the truth. Your fate is in your own hands, and from others you must expect little. Self-interest governs society —Economy, self-denial, and a fixed and earnest resolution to improve yourselves, are the only true means by which your condition can be permanently bettered, and by which you can hope to obtain consideration from the government of your

country. It is not from others, that we must expect to obtain all we desire; we must laboriously seek it for ourselves."

"Tell us how!" cried many voices.

"Make yourselves respected, and you will cease to be oppressed. When better days come round, avoid the ale-house! gather your pence together, till they become pounds, bring up your children in the love of God and of their neighbour—seek knowledge for yourselves, and for them. Had Stephenson wasted his hours in the ale-house, or in feeble, ill-directed rebellions, England would not now be covered with a net of railroads. Listen not to those who excite your passions, but try to learn truth for yourselves. Forswear spirituous liquors—forswear opium. Form book clubs—debating clubs—anything but ale-houses; let all these correspond with each other all over England, till you understand the common interests of your class, the common interests of all honest, uncorrupted men! and then—prudently ad-

vised by the wisest—and there are very wise heads amongst you—make known your wants with a universal voice, which no government can resist. Petty rebellions are like the outcries of a feeble child, but moral union is an irresistible force, when it is directed to obtain the just rights which God's wisdom meant all men should enjoy. Take the advice of a friend—return to your homes, and remain there in peace. Mr. Dalton and others of your best friends, who have your real interests at heart, although they flatter not your passions by vain boasting and worthless promises, are already actively endeavouring to alleviate your temporary distress, therefore, my friends, however wretched your present condition, I implore you not to render it yet more desperate, by rashly committing crimes which you would, yourselves, in tranquil moments, shrink from with abhorrence. Go—go in peace—I entreat you go, before it is too late! With you who call yourself the brother of this unfortunate woman,"

continued Seaton, advancing towards Forrest, "I must have some further conversation. If your sister's confession be true, and she has done me wrong, as she has herself declared, the injury must be otherwise repaired, than by a wild and ill-directed vengeance against Graves. Lucy," he continued, mildly laying his hand upon the wretched woman's arm, "you know me, and if you repent, as I would fain believe you do, you must publicly and legally attest my innocence, and thus, though late, atone for the wrongs you have made me suffer."

The unfortunate creature, as if surprised by the gentleness of the tone in which she was addressed, grasped the hand of Seaton in her withered fingers, and gazed long and wistfully at him, whilst tears gathered in her eyes.

Forrest looked anxiously at her, till he comprehended that she was unable to reply.

"I sought you long last night, sir," he

said; "I felt that you had a right to justice; I wished to tell you all, but I sought in vain. I have only one condition to make, which is, that my sister be assured of pardon, before she declares herself the accomplice of Mr. Graves's iniquities."

"Yes pardon, pardon!" cried Lucy, wildly, as she fell on her knees before Seaton, still grasping his hand in hers. "Give me your pardon, and Mr. Dalton's, and then let me die. Have mercy—oh, have mercy, for I have suffered long."

"If your repentance is sincere, I covet no vengeance," returned Seaton, mildly; "raise her," he continued, turning towards Forrest, "and bring her with me; there is much yet to be done before I can promise her pardon."

These words were pronounced in a quick, low tone, and such was the confusion which had suddenly burst forth in the assembly, that no one but James Carr and old Molly seemed to observe what was passing between Seaton and the Forrests. Every one was

engaged by anxiety for his own personal safety. At first there was a muttering of confused voices near the door, then the murmur spread, and was quickly followed by short cries of consternation, and the hasty departure of many of the workmen. To those, who still ignorant of the cause of this sudden movement, eagerly demanded what had happened, others better informed answered in trouble and consternation, that the soldiers were coming.

The sound of a troop of cavalry approaching along the road, was in a moment of tranquillity indeed plainly to be heard, and without awaiting further information, the workmen simultaneously rushed towards the door, and sprang down the stairs, in wild confusion.

Forrest, putting one arm around his sister, hurried her away in the midst of the throng, and in less than two minutes after the alarm had been given, Charles Seaton, Carr, and old Molly, were alone in the middle of the loft.

"There will be a search made," said the gentleman to his companions, "and we must not be found here. We must descend without delay by the way we mounted, and if there is yet time, get off under the shadow of the plantations."

So saying, he rapidly, and silently descended the ladder, followed by his anxious companions; and without exchanging a word, they again ran across the open space, towards the woods. They all paused when under cover of the trees, and they almost immediately afterwards, heard the soldiers commanded to halt in front of the alehouse, where they rapidly dismounted. They then saw numerous lights flickering in all directions, about the loft they had left, and the various out-houses; whilst from time to time, an angry voice was heard, uttering expressions of vexation and disappointment. Seaton and Carr both silently rejoiced, that they had escaped the suspicions, and the many unpleasant consequences, which must have followed their

discovery and arrest in this rendezvous of the disaffected.

But without exchanging a syllable, they both felt the necessity of escaping from the neighbourhood, where it was not improbable a further search would be made, than merely in the building, and under this impression, they at once re-commenced their walk with the utmost rapidity, towards the town.

They fortunately encountered no obstacle on their way, and not a creature was to be seen, when they once more trod the deserted streets. They, here, therefore, at length slackened their pace, and began seriously to take counsel, one with another, what course was the best to pursue.

Carr was of opinion, that a serious attack from the country insurgents, was still shortly to be apprehended; but he expressed a hope, that after all that had passed that night, not one of Mr. Dalton's people would take any part in the disturbances. Nevertheless, he declared his resolution,

to go at once to the colliery, and prepare the men to resist in a body, should any attempt be made, to compel them by force, to join an insurgent body marching on the town.

Charles highly approved of this resolution. He well knew that Carr, by his high moral character and intelligence, possessed an immense influence over his fellow workmen, and he gave up to him with satisfaction, a task he would gladly have taken upon himself, had not his peculiar position incapacitated him from any ostensible activity.

Nothing therefore remained for him to do, but to find Forrest, whose disappearance with Lucy, he greatly regretted. From all he had heard and seen in the loft, he had little doubt, that this man, from a desire to avenge his sister's wrongs, or perhaps some other motive, was one of the ringleaders of the insurgents, and well acquainted with him when a boy, and with part of his subsequent history in the colony, as

well as with that of his wretched sister, he trusted that he possessed a right to exercise some influence over him, at least, and that there was even a possibility, that he might succeed in appeasing his appetite for vengeance.

For his own private interest, it was also a matter of vital importance to him, to procure the confession of Lucy in a legal form, with as little delay as possible; for the wild life led by this poor outcast of society, and the chances and changes of the rebellion, in which it was probable she would be involved, made her existence so precarious, that he feared lest death might suddenly deprive him of her testimony.

Old Molly promised to direct him to the dwellings of several of the workmen whom she had recognised in the loft, but as the military were on the alert, and it might excite suspicion against himself if he were found wandering about in such a neighbourhood before daylight, the old woman insisted on his accompanying her to her

cottage, where he could rest until morning.

As he never supposed that poor Mr. Barnes would sit up for him, and was anxious to be again astir with the earliest dawn, he accepted this proposition; and having wished Carr all success in his undertaking they parted, and Seaton accompanied Molly Temple to her dwelling.

CHAPTER VII.

I would not change it; happy are you
That can translate the stubborness of fortune,
Into so quiet and so sweet a style.

Shakspere.

SEATON entered the cottage of old Molly with an anxious and troubled heart. The grey of morning was already faintly discernible above the eastern horizon; and after all he had witnessed that night, he felt a painful presentiment that the coming day would be one of misfortune and sorrow, to many, who then, perhaps,

slept peacefully, unconscious even of its approach.

He spoke little to the old woman, but she guessed pretty nearly what was passing in his mind; and when she lighted a candle and set it on her old deal table, she was not surprised to see, as he sat down in its light, that his brows were compressed —and that his dark eyes were fixed in troubled thought.

His heart was very anxious, but not on his own account. He dreaded that heavy misfortunes and aggravated sufferings, were approaching to the poor workmen and their families, and that his efforts to arrest the progress of the meditated rebellion, had been of little avail; that, perhaps, even on the morrow, the impatience of the people would break out into some open act of violence, and the fearful sum of already existing misery be increased by the useless sacrifice of many lives. The appearance of Forrest amongst the disaffected, and the spirit of vengeance with

which he had striven to exasperate those whom long suffering had previously excited to lawless intranquillity, where he rightly considered, of very bad augury.

Before Seaton met this man in the loft that night, he had not been aware of his return to England. He had known him as a bold-spirited, reckless village rake, as a horse doctor, and then a farmer, who had been spoilt by father and mother, whom he had ruined; he had heard much of his wild and dissipated life when in Australia, where he had marred his own fortunes by a reckless love of pleasure; and was aware that, though not really a bad man, he was passionate and violent when provoked. He feared, therefore, that his eager desire to avenge the wrongs of his unfortunate sister would impel him to make use without scruple of every means, however lawless and violent, which the disturbed state of the neighbourhood could possibly afford him.

The energetic character of Forrest, and,

some degree of education, qualified him admirably for a leader of the discontented workmen, whose wants he thoroughly understood, and whose passions he well knew how to flatter and excite.

A certain rude and natural eloquence, well adapted to the understandings and feelings of those he addressed, united to the claims which his sister's wrongs gave him to the people's sympathy, had, at once, secured to him a decided command in their proposed operations. But his greatest force lay in the strength and sincerity of his own passions. When the workmen were irritated by the want and suffering which were common to them all, he writhed under the keen agony of individual injury and insult. The general feelings of discontent—the sense of injustice, felt impatiently by many, were with him a passion; and, with this strength and power, Seaton foresaw he would mould all others to his will. Desperately in earnest himself, he would communicate the same spirit to all with whom he came in contact.

How to deal with such a man, was the subject of Seaton's reflections for long, as he sat with his arms crossed upon his breast in silent abstraction, whilst old Molly bustled about her cottage. He felt he must meet him alone; that he was more likely to listen to reason, and the suggestions of humanity, when there was no third person by—to accuse him of weakness or vacillation. Had Seaton known how long and earnestly he had been sought by Forrest, the evening before, he would bitterly have regretted the untoward combination of circumstances, by which their meeting had been prevented. But he built some hopes on what had passed between them in the loft—for it had been there evident, that the man bore no enmity towards him, and fully understood and acknowledged the wrong which had been done him by Graves and Lucy.

He believed that Forrest had been driven into his present violent conduct by the

desperation of poverty; and he thought it very likely that, by offers of assistance, he might yet be induced to withdraw from the rash engagements he had entered into with the rioters. At all events, this man perfectly knew his innocence, and was, therefore, more likely to be influenced by him than any one else; and he determined to go in quest of him as soon as the return of daylight enabled him to walk about without exciting suspicions. When he had thus decided, his mind was more calm. His way was clear before him.

Greatly exhausted, he now gladly partook, with old Molly, of such simple fare as she could set before him. When their meal was done, he advised her to lie down on her bed till the sun arose, whilst he would sleep on a bundle of straw in the back kitchen—for, as he said, they might have much to do on the morrow, which would require all their strength.

Worn out by fatigue and long watching, they both slept soundly in less than a quar-

ter of an hour; nor did Molly awake until the sun was shining brightly over the common. She then hastily arose; arranged her bed and her dress, and lit her fire, with as little noise as possible in order not to disturb her still sleeping guest.

She opened the door and listened; all was still in the town beneath, except the usual hum of business, which hovered, like the smoke, above and around it. When she had prepared a cup of coffee, and laid a brown loaf beside it on the table, the town clocks struck nine.

At this moment, Charles Seaton sprung up, not less astonished than his hostess, at finding it so late. Though it was impossible for him to change his clothes, the copious ablutions he made in the old woman's washing tub, refreshed him greatly. He then attacked her breakfast with a most excellent appetite.

"Ah, Molly!" he said, "it is well to have been about in the world, as you and

I have been; many things come light to us, which to others would be bitter trials."

"Yes, sir," she answered, "to them who see and think as they ought, trials are good lessons. We have both had ours, it is true; and I hope, when we come to our last hour, we shall both find we have profitted by them. Adversity must come to all, sooner or later; the only difference is, how men receive its teaching. Look at that Forrest there! he has had adversity enough; but it has only hardened him, and not raised his thoughts above revenge and ambition, as it has done yours, Mr. Charles. He made me tremble, when he talked to the people so, last night; and yet, what good will he do by working them up in that violent way? It can only bring many into prison—perhaps, to death—and himself to the gallows. The people were ready enough to listen to you, for the moment, but peaceful counsel is soon forgotten by angry

men—and I fear he will do mischief yet!"

"We must prevent him if we can," returned Seaton. "I shall try this morning to find him; and, in the meanwhile, you must go up to Miss Dalton's, and tell her where I am—for it is very likely that Mr. Barnes, in his anxiety on my account, may have gone thither the first thing this morning and alarmed her very needlessly. Tell her from me, that she and my sister Amy must, on no account, venture amongst the poor to-day. If any disturbances take place they will be in the lower quarter of the town; and though nothing was agreed upon in our presence last night, no one can be sure of tranquillity from one quarter of an hour to another. And go, I beg you also to Mr. Vernon, and say that it will be impossible for me to attend to-day, at his office."

The old woman, delighted to be trusted and of use, readily agreed to perform all Seaton desired, and prepared to set off

without delay. Before her departure, he requested her to give him the key of her door, lest, before her return, any unforeseen occurrence might render it necessary for him to seek safety and concealment for himself or others, in her cottage. This she readily confided to him, and then wishing him a good morning, she set off, leaving him still seated at the table. Here he remained for some time, lost in profound thought, and forgetful of all around.

But, before many minutes had elapsed, his reflections were interrupted by some one softly lifting the latch of the house-door, towards which his back was turned. He sprang up; but before he had advanced three steps, it was pushed open from without, and Grace Dalton passed the threshold.

"Grace, dear Grace," he said, in an agitated voice, as he sprang towards her, "what brings you from your home, at such a time as this."

"Oh, Charles, how glad I am to see you

here!" she returned, without appearing to have heard his enquiry, and putting both her hands into his. "We have been in terrible anxiety on your account. We knew not what to think, and dreaded that some misfortune had befallen you."

"No, dearest; you see I am well and strong; but I was employed in trying to prevent misfortune." Then drawing her to a chair, he seated himself beside her, overjoyed beyond expression, by this unexpected meeting, and forgetting, for the moment, his intention to depart. "And so, Grace, you were really anxious about me?" he said, in a low voice.

"Had I not cause, when I heard from Mr. Barnes, that you had not been at home the whole night?"

"Dear Grace! I suppose I ought to say I am sorry to have caused you pain! But I cannot—for it is precious to feel that you care about me—that you really can be anxious about such a weather-beaten fel-

low, as I am. You have made me quite happy, Grace, whatever other troubles I may have."

"You do not doubt my love, Charles, that such a slight proof of common regard, can give you pleasure?" she inquired half reproachfully.

"Oh, no, no! I would rather die," he returned, "but still, it is precious to hear your sweet, kind words—and they are doubly sweet to my ears, after the wild jargon of rude passions which I heard during the past night."

"Where? And by what have you been detained?" eagerly demanded the lady, whilst her eyes were fixed with a look of the most anxious affection on Seaton's face.

"I have, indeed, had many strange adventures," he replied. "I have made further discoveries of Graves's infamy; I have attended a meeting of the discontented workmen, which was dispersed by the soldiery."

"Good Heavens, Charles! why have you run into such danger?" demanded Grace, eagerly.

"I went to try to make the poor deluded creatures listen to reason," answered Seaton, smiling on her with a look of ineffable love. "Dearest Grace, you would be the last to wish that I should take heed only for my own personal welfare. In the hope of preventing bloodshed, I ventured to enter, unbidden, into the nocturnal assembly of the rioters; it was a wild scene—yet, strange to say, I found Lucy Forrest in the midst of it."

"And did you speak with her on your own affairs?" was the lady's eager demand.

"Yes—and with her brother also, who has returned from Australia. But when the soldiers were heard approaching both fled, I know not whither, in the first wild moment of alarm and confusion. The man, it appears, is one of the ringleaders of the rebels."

"If that be the case, there probably is little hope of procuring their testimony," said Grace.

"It is most urgent that I should find them before the tumult breaks out—as, no doubt, it will do, very shortly," replied Seaton, "and I was on the point of going in search of them, when you entered."

"Have you any idea where they are likely to be found?"

"I saw a man amongst the rioters, last night, who formerly belonged to our parish, and knew me well, as a boy. He now keeps a public house not far from here, and being a dissipated, idle fellow, who has been concerned in some notorious poaching affair—he is, of course, very well disposed to disturb the existing order of society. It is supposed he has long been very active in fomenting the spirit of discontent amongst the workmen. He must know Forrest well, as they are from the same neighbourhood; and I think it very

probable that I shall either find him, or, at least, learn something about him, at this man's public house."

"But may you not expose yourself to suspicion, by going to such a place?"

"It is possible, but if I can persuade Forrest to quit a bad cause, even at the last hour, it is well worth the risk."

"Do you really fear disturbances in the town, to-day?"

"Every hour!" replied Seaton. "I learnt nothing positively; but I suspect that an attack is meditated this very morning, on the granary and store-houses of Graves."

"You terrify me!"

"Yes; it is fearful to think of the probability of so much evil and mischief occurring, which we have no power to prevent," answered Charles. "I can give no warning to the authorities of the town, because I am certain of nothing; and, it is possible, an attack might be made in a

totally different quarter, if any precautions were taken to defend Graves's property."

"But it is not only the public insecurity which alarms me," said Grace, pressing the hand of Seaton with tremulous eagerness in hers, and gazing with tearful eyes on his animated countenance.

"What then, dearest?" he eagerly demanded.

"I almost fear to tell you," she replied, "yet you must know, for you can better go further in search of her than I. I came hither in hopes of finding your sister Amy with old Molly."

"Good Heavens, she is not out alone, when the town is in such an agitated state?" demanded Charles, in a voice of extreme agitation.

"Yes! and in that very part of the town likely to be the scene of the worst disturbances," replied Grace, with trembling and hurried accents. "We knew nothing of what was passing, and I let her

go this morning, without the slightest apprehension, to the school, and to the houses of several poor people, to whom she has for some time been in the habit of carrying a weekly alms."

"Oh, Grace, Grace, what do I hear!" exclaimed Charles, and he sprang from his seat, with ungovernable anxiety in his look and voice, and with his arms folded on his breast, paced the cottage rapidly.

"Dear Charles, do not reproach me," murmured Grace. "If any misfortune should befal her, I never could forgive myself," and she burst into tears.

"My own kind cousin," said Seaton, again seating himself near her, and passing his arm around her waist, "do not thus needlessly afflict yourself. Pardon my first burst of feeling! it is past, and I trust that all may yet go well. You are not in any way to blame, dearest; no disturbances have probably yet broken out, and I shall find Amy, we must hope, before long, and I will bring her to you here."

In the midst of all her anxiety, it was impossible for Grace to listen to the tender cheering tones of that voice, without feelings of inexpressible pleasure. It thrilled through every fibre of her frame—yet she made no answer. She only looked up and smiled in Seaton's face, with an expression of infinite trust and affection, whilst she softly pressed his hand. He bent down and kissed her. To both, those were moments of unclouded happiness, as they sat side by side, in the stillness of that humble cottage, for their hearts were animated by the highest and purest feelings of mutual love and faith.

But the pause was short. The joy was fleeting as the last rays of the evening sun, which make the gazer blind to all surrounding objects. Dark and evil presentiments followed, like the night, chill and sombre, to Charles Seaton's heart; but he did not utter them; he did not tell Grace, that he dreaded that this might be the last time they should thus meet; he did not

tell her, that if Lucy perished before he had obtained her open and complete attestation of his innocence of all the charges she had formerly brought against him, they could never more thus meet, as affianced lovers, for though other evidence might be collected, sufficient to procure him a free pardon, he had fully resolved never to expose the creature he loved best upon earth to the degradation and the agony of being the wife of a man accused of crimes by a witness, who had not fully and clearly, and legally, attested the falsehood of the charges she had fully and clearly, and legally brought against him. He dreaded that to obtain this satisfaction, which he sensitively felt could alone restore him the character of his youth, without stain and without reproach, it was already too late; but as he gazed on Grace, he could not tell her so. He could not tell her how entirely their ultimate happiness depended on the events of the next few hours, and

he betrayed no anxiety, but that he felt on Amy's account.

Grace, though she would gladly have prolonged the happiness she so unexpectedly enjoyed, implored Seaton not to linger longer with her, and said, that if he really wished to console her, for her imprudence in allowing his young sister to leave home alone at so early an hour of the morning, he must go at once, in search of her.

"Yes, Grace," he returned, starting up, "I go, though fain would I have remained longer here with you. Such happiness has been rare in my life. But you must promise me not to leave the cottage on any account, until I return. You will be perfectly safe here, whatever may happen, and I will be back as soon as possible."

"Look, look, Charles! there are at least a dozen men running down the other side of the common, as if some uproar had already commenced in the lower town!" cried Grace, pointing with alarm from the window.

"Bolt and bar the door, as well as you can, after me," answered Seaton, quickly, "and mind you open to no one, except you know the voice."

"I have no fears, but for you and Amy," she replied.

"God guard you, dearest," said Seaton, in a voice which betrayed his profound emotion, and after tenderly embracing her, he hurried from the cottage.

She stood on the threshold a few minutes, watching his tall and powerful figure, as he sprang from bank to bank down the steep and broken ground, instead of taking a more circuitous path towards the town, and there was pride and there was exultation in her loving heart, as she thought of all his goodness and the power which she trusted Providence had bestowed upon her, to obliterate for the future, from his noble and sensitive mind, all traces of his early sorrows.

CHAPTER VIII.

I therefore recommend, though at the risk
Of popular disgust, yet boldly still,
The cause of piety, and sacred truth!

COWPER.

ALTHOUGH it was at length perfectly clear to every one at all acquainted with the state of popular feeling, and the causes of popular excitement in that town and neighbourhood, that the commencement of very serious riots and disturbances was every hour to be dreaded, it was impossible to divine when the tumult would break loose, or where it would first wreak its fury.

It was, therefore, not without very serious and just apprehensions, that Seaton left Grace Dalton alone and unprotected in old Molly's cottage, but his anxiety for his sister allowed him no choice. He hoped that the poverty of the place might prove its surest guard.

Great as was his anxiety to see and speak with Forrest, he hastened first to the village school in search of Amy. He learnt that she had been there two hours before, but whither she had gone on leaving it the people he questioned could not inform him. After calling at several poor cottages, where the answer he invariably received was, that she had been there some time before, his way led him past the public house, where, as he had told Grace, he thought it likely he might obtain some intelligence concerning Forrest.

As he had hitherto seen no signs of any disturbances, his anxiety on his sister's account had greatly diminished, and think-

ing it probable from all he had heard, that she had already returned home, he resolved to seize that opportunity of speaking with the landlord of the Black Bull.

On entering the passage he was met by this man, who evidently seemed embarrassed by his unusual visit, although he knew him well.

He demanded very civilly if there was any way in which he could serve Mr. Seaton, yet he stood directly before him, as if to prevent him advancing further.

"I am neither a customer, nor a spy," answered Charles, very tranquilly, "yet you would serve me most importantly, if you could direct me where to find John Forrest, or his sister Lucy, who was with him in the loft last night."

"I know not what to say, Mr. Seaton," returned the landlord. "You have cause of bitter enmity against the woman, certainly, and I would not willingly bring the unfortunate creature into more trouble."

"Then you do not deny that you know where they are to be found?" said Seaton, eagerly.

"Perhaps I do," was the cautious reply.

"I positively assure you I mean them no ill. The woman has it in her power to do me a great service with regard to my private interest; and with the man, I wish to speak on matters which concern us all."

"Oh, if you belong to the association, I must see what can be done for you," returned the man, misunderstanding the meaning of Seaton's last words. "Follow me, sir, if you please."

So saying he led the way up stairs.

All was perfectly still in the house, as if none of its usual frequenters were there, but the mysterious manner of the landlord made the tranquillity of this well known resort of evil characters more suspicious than re-assuring. When the door of a back kitchen was opened for a moment, Charles saw that it was quite full of men in their working dresses, and he observed

that the stairs were marked with the recent prints of many muddy feet. But he asked no questions, and quietly followed his guide into a small sanded room on the first floor, where he begged him to wait alone for a few minutes, and then left him without giving any reason for this request.

The window opened above a little yard; and as Seaton stood near it, he had full time to observe a number of wild-looking figures, from time to time passing in and out of a back door, opening into a dark and unfrequented alley. It was quite clear there was something unusual going on in the house.

Not more than five minutes elapsed before the landlord returned.

"If you wish to speak to Forrest, sir," he said, "come with me."

Seaton immediately complied with this request, and they went up the stairs to the second story.

"Go in there, if you please," said the landlord, then pointing to the door of a

front room, "you will find him at liberty to speak to you, and there is no time to lose."

When Seaton entered, he saw the man of whom he was in search, standing gazing eagerly from the window, though in such a position as not to be seen from the street beneath.

He slightly bowed, but did not change his position when his visitor entered. His dress was much disordered, and he looked even more haggard and fatigued, than when Seaton had seen him in the loft. Anxiety was written in legible characters on his face, and it was no common anxiety. It was the anxiety of intense passion, watching eagerly for the favourable moment to burst forth, and seize the object for which it thirsted; it was the anxiety of one who knew that this thirst could alone be slaked in blood, at the risk of his own liberty, or life.

The contrast this passionate, reckless, and desperate man offered, to the calm,

noble figure, and benevolent countenance of Charles Seaton was most striking. They had both suffered; the one from his own passions, the other from the passions and injustice of others. But the sufferings which the one had brought upon himself, had been his ruin, both morally and physically; the trials of the other had only served to strengthen and elevate him above the passions and vices of ordinary men.

Forrest felt all this, as he surveyed his visitor for a few moments, with mingled curiosity and admiration. He was the first to break silence.

"You come here at a strange moment, sir," he said, "and I tell you candidly, if you come to preach the same doctrines you broached in the shed last night, it is useless! It is too late to talk of prudence and of peace to me!"

"Such was my intention, I confess," answered Seaton, mildly. "I have known you long, Forrest, and I know there is

much in you worth saving. Were you not blinded by passion, you must see as clearly as I do, that the undertaking in which you are engaged, is perfect madness. What can a thousand, nay five thousand poor rioters do, against the strength of an established government."

"I care nothing for an established government," replied Forrest, frankly. "I can speak plainly to you, Mr. Charles, because you are an injured man, as well as myself. My only sister has been shamefully ruined, and cast off, nay, persecuted almost to death, by one of the vilest of the worshippers of mammon. The law can give her no redress, and I am determined to avenge her, that is all! If I die in the struggle, it matters not, for the time that is passed, I have misused; and the time that is to come, will find me a friendless and a ruined man. I do not desire life on such terms."

"But if you should survive this desperate revenge," rejoined Seaton, "your own con-

dition, and that of your sister, will be infinitely worse than it is now. She has done me great injury, as you know, but I regard her as a weak, deluded creature, and bear her no enmity whatever. If she will openly confess her perjury, and give a legal attestation of the falsehood of her evidence against me, I promise you, on my word of honour, I will assure you the means of providing for the future comfort of you both."

"Ah, sir, had I met you yesterday," murmured Forrest. "I sought you the whole evening; for I had then first learnt the cruel means by which that rascal Graves had effected my sister's ruin, and yours. I wished to make you all the reparation in our power, but I sought you in vain. Perhaps had I met you, and heard the offers you make now, I might never have joined the meeting, last night, in the loft. But it is done. I went thither mad and desperate—the interference of the sodliers irritated me yet

more—and I afterwards entered into engagements I cannot now withdraw from, I have persuaded others to adopt a desperate course, and I am not such a miserable wretch as to leave them to meet alone the dangers to which I have hurried them. I have chosen my way, and I must abide by it."

"But the people are still tranquil," said Charles, eagerly, "and you would do better to assist me in persuading them to give up all attempts at useless violence, than to lead them to ruin and death, from a false sense of honour."

"Ah, sir," answered Forrest, shaking his head," you don't understand these matters I see. You talk reason when the poor, ignorant, suffering people, are only now to be governed by their passions. It is too late to reason. They are not easily aroused, but that once done there can be no peace again, without bloodshed."

"Then you are decided to persevere in

your desperate course," said Seaton, "and no offers that I can make you, are of any avail ?"

"None, whatever !" answered Forrest, firmly, though he plainly read on the countenance of Seaton, his regret that a man of so much energy and mistaken sense of right, should have given himself up to such lawless and dangerous designs.

"You pity me, Mr. Seaton," he added. "Time was, when I was a dashing young fellow, I would have knocked any man down who presumed to express such a feeling, by look, or word, but I am tamed now, and not so hard as I seem. I will remember your kindness, and if I survive to-day, I promise you, that Lucy's testimony shall be given in such a way, as fully to establish your innocence, and suffice to procure you a free pardon. But listen ! listen !" he cried, suddenly standing in an attitude of eager attention. "I surely hear a mob running in this direction !

Look out Mr. Seaton, I beg of you, and tell me if there is any crowd gathering in the street ?"

Charles hurried to the window, and whilst his back was turned, the landlord hastily entered, and whispered a few hurried words in Forrest's ear. He became livid as a corpse, and his lips trembled as he listened, but he made no reply. He only took up a horse-whip from the table, and grasped it firmly in his right hand.

" Well, sir, what do you see ?" he then demanded, with a bitter laugh, very unlike his former expression.

" Men and women are running in all directions," answered Seaton, withdrawing from the window ; " and if you are resolved to take a prominent part in the approaching tumult, I have no longer any business here."

" Oh, sir, this is only a miserable prologue," said Forrest, laughing. " It will

be over in a quarter of an hour; and though I have no wish to detain you against your inclination, I should seriously advise you to remain where you are, for the present. The crowd will soon pass in another direction"

"Tell me, before I depart, where your sister is to be found, or where I can meet you again, to receive the evidence you have promised?"

"I know not where she is," was the hurried reply. "But rely upon me. If I survive to-day I will come to you without fail."

"If you are beaten, as the rioters must be, you will be obliged to seek concealment," answered Seaton.

"Yes—I know that—but still I will come, if you will name some place out of the town, where I can wait for you," returned Forrest.

"At James Carr's, near the East Colliery—above the common," was the reply.

"I shall remember; but listen now, the waves are rising higher," said Forrest, rapidly.

And truly there was a vast murmur of a tumult in the streets, like the rushing of many waters, broken repeatedly by shrill cries and shouts of menace.

"Graves! Graves is coming," was suddenly screamed, by more than a hundred voices before the house.

Charles Seaton and Forrest now both rushed to the window. The scene which presented itself beneath was one of the wildest tumult and violence.

A mob, composed of pitmen from the country, of the most wretched of Mr. Graves's discarded workmen, of tattered, half-starved looking women and children, and of vagrants of the very lowest description, was gathered as far as the eye could reach. Young and old, male and female, were all struggling, and shrieking and pushing, in a wild state of excitement.

and fury, which made them more resemble demons, than the human inhabitants of a professedly civilised and christian land. The confusion and uproar every moment increased.

"Behold how these tumults degrade instead of benefitting your fellow creatures," said Seaton to his companion; "and, for the love of mercy, come with me below, and assist me in endeavouring to appease these unfortunate people?"

"You may do as you please, sir," returned Forrest, laughing, with an excitement that bordered on madness; "I have another task. Do you know that man, sir, struggling and fighting vainly with the mob? That is Graves! yes, Graves—and I have likewise an account to settle with him, which I cannot delay."

Seaton looked eagerly in the direction to which his companion pointed, and there, in truth, he beheld the banker, without his hat, his coat hanging in shreds from his

shoulders, and his face livid with fear and rage, struggling hopelessly in the hands of the mob.

He turned his eyes away, with a feeling of horror and disgust, from the frightful spectacle; but it appeared that he then beheld something yet more terrible in the throng, for he uttered a wild exclamation of surprise and consternation, and sprang after Forrest, who had already left the room.

Seaton darted down the stairs with the utmost velocity. The landlord met him in the passage. He had the presence of mind to feel that this man might be of use, and he told him in a few hurried words the object he had in view. He made no reply, but immediately snatched up a stout cudgel, and followed Seaton into the street.

CHAPTER IX.

Pure in her aim, and in her temper mild,
Her wisdom seems the weakness of a child.

When one that holds communion with the skies
Has filled his urn where these pure waters rise,
And once more mingles with us meaner things,
'Tis e'en as if an angel shook his wings;
Immortal fragrance fills the circle wide,
That tells us whence his treasures were supplied.

COWPER.

AMY had left her home that sunny morning, with a light and joyous heart, so happy in the present, that all her former apprehensions for the future were entirely

forgotten. Brought up to depend early on herself for support and protection, it never occurred to her mind that a living creature would observe her, when fearless as a child of poverty can be, she passed through the streets with her little basket on her arm. She had a thousand pleasant thoughts of her brother and Grace, and of the delight of the poor people whose wants she was charged to relieve, so that she never once observed that there was any unusual agitation pervading the town. Had she been in the open meadows, she would have caroled as she pursued her way, but though silently she passed along the dull black streets, there was something cheering to the hearts of the old in the buoyant tread and joyous beauty of that young and innocent creature. They recalled to them days of youth, and hope, and purity long past away. Many turned to look after her with kindly admiration, though she knew it not, but purity and goodness were too legible on her beaming countenance, for

anyone to dare to address her, and having left her parcel at the school, she paid several visits, and at length reached the cottage of the poor Gibsons without molestation.

The woman and child now sufficiently recovered from the fever to sit up, were employed in knitting near the sick workman's bed, for though no longer in danger, he was still too feeble to arise.

Amy was received by these poor creatures with a joyful love and gratitude, so touching that her eyes were full of tears as she returned their friendly welcome. But they were tears of pleasure.

Poor Gibson stretched out his thin, pale hand towards her with a smile, as she approached his bed, and thanked her in broken words for all her kindness. She, with the good woman's help, quickly unpacked the little basket of necessaries she had brought, and then returning to the invalid, spread out a small bunch of flowers upon the bed.

"Pretty creature," he said, "you bring the freshness of spring into the sick man's room. It is long since I have had such a pleasure," and he took the flowers one by one, and smelt them with an avidity which only one so long deprived of the balmy odours of nature could feel.

The kindness which had dictated that simple present, endeared Amy more to that poor man's heart than if she had given him a purse of gold in charity.

"I thought you would be tired of lying so long shut up here," she said, "and so I have brought a book to amuse you and your wife a little. If you would like to hear me, I will read you a few pages?"

Both the good people thanked her gratefully for this proposition, and she drew a seat to the bed-side. The little girl placed herself on a wooden stool close at her knees; and the poor wife holding her husband's hand in hers, sat on his bed, and weary of work was content to rest,

whilst she listened eagerly to the gentle voice of Amy whilst she read.

The "Pilgrim's Progress" was the book she had chosen; and, as in that lowly dwelling of sickness and poverty she read of the widow's pilgrimage, she seemed herself the very personification of "Loving Mercy."

So completely were the hearts and imaginations of all present engaged by the contents of that quaint old book of happy tidings for the poor, that they were long unconscious that Amy had any other listener than Gibson and his family, or that Mr. Dalton had entered unperceived, and stood for nearly a quarter of an hour, with his arms folded on his breast, watching the pretty reader with profound and curious attention.

She had laid aside her bonnet, and the light morn stream through the narrow window full upon her fair and youthful head, half bowed over the book she held, and rendered yet more fresh and lovely

by its contrast to the worn and emaciated faces of those around her. But it was the sweet benevolence, beaming like a spiritual light from her countenance, which made it impossible for the good man to look on her, without fatherly love. Tears filled his eyes when he remembered that such might his own lost daughter now have been, had she been spared to him.

It was a pleasant sight, even to him, to see how the cheerful voice, the loving smile, and words of holy comfort of that young girl, diffused happiness and cheerfulness, in that abode of disease. The poor man forgot his sufferings as she read of Christian's blest abode in the Celestial city ; and the wife and her little girl listened eagerly to all that befell the widow and her boys, in the house of the Interpreter. Amy paused for a moment, to let the child look at the picture of Mercy kneeling at the gate, and a slight movement of Mr. Dalton's, then, for the first time, attracted her attention.

The backs of all present, except herself, were towards him ; but now, when he saw he was observed, he came forward, and, bowing with respect to Amy, who arose as he approached, he took the hand of Gibson in his, and kindly enquired after his health.

"Better! better both in mind and body, sir ; thanks to God's mercy, and the charity of you, and this kind young lady, who Miss Dalton first brought to us. May Heaven bless and reward you both'" was the poor man's reply.

Mr. Dalton again looked towards the blushing girl ; her innocent beauty awakened many remembrances in his mind ; and he felt she could be no other than Amy Seaton, his long banished niece. But he forebore to question further. Now he had seen her, he could not bear the idea of withholding from her the affection of a relative ; and that was no time nor place, to make acknowledgments and explanations. Nevertheless, a great change had

taken place in his mind very recently, with regard to her brother. Facts had been disclosed to him that monring, during an interview with Martha Graves's jeweller, which seemed to throw a new light upon Seaton's past history; and half-trusting, half-hoping, that the barrier which had so long divided him from his nephew, Charles, and his sister, would, ere long, be entirely removed, he rejoiced that the sweet character of the girl was such, that he might be proud to give her a place in his heart.

Amy scarcely dared to raise her eyes from the ground beneath his piercing glance, for she well knew in whose presence she stood; and she dreaded lest he should discover who she really was. She felt no resentment against her uncle—that he had cast her out from his love, and denied her his protection, after her mother's death, —for, knowing all he had suffered, she felt more inclined to pity, and to love him, for

his kindness to all others who were in misfortune and affliction.

She timidly returned his salutation, and resumed her seat.

"Allow me to thank you for your kindness to this honest man and his family," said Mr. Dalton, gently addressing her. "It is seldom that the young have time enough to spare from pleasure for such sad duties."

"You are very good," answered Amy, timidly raising her large, soft blue eyes to those of Mr. Dalton, and there was so much benevolence in the look with which he regarded her, that she did not withdraw them, as she added, "it has been no sad duty to me to come here, for my little services have been ever paid with gratitude."

"You were reading when I entered. It grieves me, if I have interrupted you. It gladdened my heart to see youth and innocence administering consolation to the spirits of those who are heavy laden, and

bringing them the support of love as well as charity. It will be the better for you, my child, in your own days of trial."

"It is a quaint but pleasant book, I love to read," said Amy, blushing, "so I thought that these good people must love it likewise."

"We are all treading the same road as Christian and his children," answered Mr. Dalton, "therefore every one finds something therein, which he can lay up as a treasure in his own heart, for time of need; more especially the poor whom Christ came to comfort. But, my dear young lady," he added, with a sudden change of tone, "I wonder that your friends have allowed you to come into this quarter at so early an hour, when the night had been so disturbed."

"We had heard nothing to excite apprehension when I left home," returned Amy.

"Know you not that an outbreak of the workmen is almost hourly apprehended?

It is thought that certain granaries in this part of the town will probably be the point of attack."

"I feared no danger when I came here, as I had often done before," replied the girl.

"It is possible that all may remain quiet to-day! no one can say," answered Mr. Dalton, "but still this is no place for you at such a crisis, and as an old man, I advise you to return home with all possible celerity. For Gibson and his family there is nothing to apprehend, but for you it is very different, and even your absence from home, were any disturbances to take place, would cause serious uneasiness to your friends."

"Were I as strong as formerly, she should not go home alone," said poor Gibson, raising himself in his bed, with some return of his healthful energy.

"Nor shall she now," said Mr. Dalton, mildly, "if she will accept the escort of an old man. My own arm is now weak,

young lady," he added, "but should there be danger, I trust I can readily find many strong ones to defend you."

"I thank you from my heart," answered Amy, to whom such an offer from the uncle who had been so long estranged from her, gave an indescribable pleasure, though she trembled when she thought that did he know her at that moment, he would cast from him the hand he now so kindly held in his, and leave her to find her way alone to her home, as she had been left for long indeed to struggle through the world. She would have rejoiced had she then known that she had been recognized, and that these offers were made in full knowledge, whilst the heart of Mr. Dalton was glowing with feelings of the warmest affection and sympathy towards her.

If love did not often make itself felt without the aid of words, it would confer comparatively but little happiness in this world; but it has a language of its own, which, though frequently only expressed

by looks and movements, is more true and persuasive than if spoken with the lips. This mysterious discourse had already been understood between Amy and her uncle, and though no further explanation took place between them, the hearts of both were gladdened by a silent compact of affection, when the girl leaning on the old gentleman's arm, they left Gibson's cottage together.

The good people blessed them as they departed, and if ever human wishes deserved to be fulfilled it was those of the sick man and his family for the welfare of these departing friends.

Mr. Dalton conversed with Amy on various subjects as they pursued their way, and he was ever more and more delighted with the artlessness and intelligence of the young girl. He deeply regretted the barrier that existed between them, and he involuntarily felt pained by the idea, that she had in all probability been educated to regard him with resentment and aversion.

He longed to turn the conversation in such a manner as to enable him to ascertain if such were the fact; but before he could decide how to proceed, all idea of further discourse with his companion was banished from his mind, by the sudden appearance of Mr. Graves, who, as they approached a large and newly erected granary, came with haste from one of its open doors. He was accompanied by a merchant, with whom he had been making a bargain not only for the sale of the corn and flour his store-houses contained, but also for the buildings, which in his eager desire to realize money for his flight, he had disposed of much below their value, for the consideration of receiving ready money. He was to be paid that very afternoon when the whole bargain was to be concluded.

It cannot be denied that the purchaser had a very strong suspicion, that if Mr. Graves had not intended to cheat his creditors he never would have made such a sacrifice, but he prudently considered that

was no business of his, and determined to profit by the circumstances without enquiring further. Whether such men are rare or not I leave it to my readers to determine.

"I shall see you then again at my own house, at three o'clock," said Graves, to his companion, as they paused for a moment in the street.

"Without fail," was the reply, "and if I find the title deeds in order, I will pay the money down," and then shaking hands, they parted.

Graves immediately came up to Mr. Dalton in the most frank and friendly manner; but notwithstanding his audacity, he was somewhat daunted by the marked coldness of that gentleman's manner towards him.

He glanced with considerable curiosity at the fair companion leaning on his arm. He thought he had seen her somewhere before, but their former interview had been so short, and the difference of dress was so great, that he did not recognize her.

Yet he felt a great desire to know who she could be, more from habitual inquisitiveness than from any interest he now had in Mr. Dalton's affairs. All hope of profitting by his inheritance was at an end for ever.

Yet he wished to keep up appearances to the last, and to prevent suspicion of his meditated flight, he felt there was no surer means than to be seen walking in a friendly and intimate manner with Mr. Dalton. It was also possible that, mistrusting the feelings of the inhabitants of that part of the town towards himself, he felt safer from personal molestation in the company of a man whom he could not help knowing was universally beloved and respected.

"My dear sir," he said, addressing Mr. Dalton, "I am astonished to see you in this part of the town."

"That, I believe, is no uncommon circumstance," was the tranquil reply.

"Yes, but to-day is very different from ordinary occasions," said Graves. "And

for that young lady too—it is no place for her. Let me entreat you, sir, to return home at once. Not a workman has gone to work this morning, and there is scarcely a creature to be seen in the streets. There must be something very serious in agitation, you may depend upon it."

"I am astonished to see you here, if you have such apprehensions," returned Mr. Dalton. "You are certainly more obnoxious to the workmen than I am."

"Oh, for that matter, these scoundrels make no distinction," answered Graves, bitterly. "But certainly I should not have come hither, had I not been compelled to do so, by business. I had to make a bargain with regard to the corn and flour, I was foolish enough to keep in store, in hopes of better times. But I must say in the present state of affairs, I was impatient to get rid of them, for the whole may be burnt to night, for any thing we can do to prevent it."

"A pleasing prospect for the purchaser," answered Mr. Dalton, coolly.

"That is not my affair," was the reply. "If he does not understand the signs of the times, he must suffer for his ignorance. I do understand them a little, and seek to help myself as well as I can. You have heard, I presume, that an express came from Linton this morning, to demand a strong party of soldiers, as the rioters were mustering there, several thousand strong, and compelling all the pitmen to join them. Another detachment was sent to the west, half an hour later, so that absolutely there are not a hundred men now remaining at the barracks, and I have in vain requested a garrison for my granary. The Colonel says he cannot divide the small force which remains. We may all be plundered and murdered before the reinforcements arrive from the south, for they are not expected before evening,"

"The discontent is so general, that the military have probably enough to do in

CHAPTER X.

Civilisation and wealth have been the causes of this degradation; and it must be their function, knowing what they cannot fail to know, to remedy the evils they have unconsciously inflicted.

Edinburgh Review.

In the way towards the upper town, Amy Seaton and her companions had to pass through certain dirty streets and narrow alleys, where many circumstances occurred, to excite suspicion and apprehension.

Mr. Dalton had not failed to observe, that whilst Graves was talking to his friend

before the granary, a tattered lad had come out of a lodging house, of ill fame, immediately opposite to them, and ran quickly down the street. He had seen the same boy, once or twice afterwards, dart with the rapidity of lightning from one house to another. Grim looking heads peeped from time to time cautiously from behind the doors, as they passed, and sometimes women came out, and followed them for a short distance. Amy knew several of them, and spoke kindly to them, but she received no reply. Their menacing glances were directed at Graves, and not at her.

Mr. Dalton frequently looked kindly at his niece, to see if she felt any terror of the dangers he began seriously to apprehend, but young and inexperienced, she knew not how to interpret all she saw, so well as he did, and fully assured that she was safe under his protection, she thought not that the slightest cause existed, for immediate apprehension. Like Una, she was

defended even from terror, by her purity and innocence.

The feelings of Mr. Graves were very different. He was perfectly aware, in spite of what he had asserted to Mr. Dalton, that he, personally, had more to dread than any one, from the violence of the excited workmen, and he bitterly repented his rashness, in venturing, even in pursuit of gain, into a quarter where he had given the wretched inhabitants so much cause to regard him as their bitterest enemy.

On turning the corner of a dark and dirty street, into a wider thoroughfare, they came suddenly in sight of the public-house, known by the sign of the Black Bull, where Seaton, that same morning, had gone in quest of Forrest.

Mr. Graves, also, knew the landlord well. He had been very active in assisting a friend, on whose lands the man had shot a hare, in having him arrested and imprisoned for poaching. The fellow had found many means of annoying him since

then, and it was pretty well known, that his house had been the place where the discontented, both of town and country, had held secret meetings, for some time past.

Half-a-dozen idle fellows were lounging round the door, when Mr. Dalton and his companions first came in sight of it. Almost at the same moment, a man, in the blue-checked working dress of the pitmen, put his fingers in his mouth, and gave a long, loud, shrill whistle.

"By Heaven, sir, we are all lost!" cried Graves, turning to Mr. Dalton, and becoming as pale as death, when he heard the sound; and he stood suddenly still, as if deprived of all power of motion, by his terror of immediate danger.

"We must go back, and try to get home by another road," said Mr. Dalton, quickly, but with perfect calmness.

One look, however, towards the street they had left, sufficed to convince him that retreat was impossible. More than

twenty men, with pickaxes and cudgels in their hands, were running rapidly up it towards them.

"There is nothing for it, but to trust in our innocence and harmless intentions, and go forward," said the gentleman, once more rapidly resuming his way. "Amy, my dear child," he added, forgetting all desire of concealing his recognition of his niece, in his anxiety for her safety, "you must cling fast to me, happen what may. I will do all I can to protect you; but on no account let us be divided, and show as little fear as possible."

Even in this moment of great peril, the eyes of the girl overflowed with tears of joy, at hearing her name thus tenderly pronounced, by the uncle who had so long disowned her, for she could no longer doubt that he had known her during the whole of the time they had been together, and had, with this knowledge, voluntarily taken her under his care.

But this feeling was only momentary.

It flashed like a light over her mind, and was then lost in terror, when she saw more than twenty men, armed in various ways, rush from the public-house, and close up the way before them. A confused and wild mob of men, women, and children, came running, almost at the same time, from various directions, towards them, shouting and yelling with savage fury.

"No passage this way, gentlemen," cried a huge fellow, with bare arms, and a face still black with the dust of the forge, who wielded a heavy iron hammer, as if it had been a straw.

"Whatever cause of dispute you may have with others, you can have none with me, nor with this young lady," said Mr. Dalton, standing perfectly collected and calm before his half-drunk and angry opponents. "You will do wisely in allowing us to pass."

"Shall we?" cried a little meagre pitman; "we are the best judges of that."

"She is a lady, is she?" muttered

third. "What brings her here then, amongst such as us? Why does she not roll about in her carriage, like Martha Graves, and send a sixpence to our starving wives, as she does?"

"She has been herself to help and comfort them," said Mr. Dalton.

"It is too late!" roared nearly a hundred voices at once, for the crowd was now gathering thick and deep around them. "It is too late," was echoed far and wide. "Greater than she should have helped us; but it is too late! we want none of their help now, we can help ourselves."

"We asked for justice long enough!" cried one of Graves's discarded workmen; "and nobody listened to us! we asked for bread, and they sent us the parish officer. We mean to take what we want now, and there is an end of it."

The clamour now became fearful; some mocked Amy for her beauty; one woman took her by the shoulder, another dragged

her shawl from her back, whilst Mr. Dalton, well aware that violence or resistance would only provoke their destruction, endeavoured, by every gentle means in his power, to defend her from insult, and persuade those who were nearest to him to open him a passage. But, unfortunately, none of these people knew him, and his voice was lost in the shrill cries, and yells, and whistles, which, every moment, became more wild and alarming.

At length, a strong, young pitman, who had, that morning, swallowed a pretty considerable quantity of whisky, put his arms round Amy's waist, and attempted to drag her from Mr. Dalton. The girl gave a loud scream, and clung with both arms to her uncle for protection.

"Shame on you to insult a woman," cried the gentleman, endeavouring to push the fellow away with one hand, whilst he held Amy fast with the other; but the man only laughed aloud, and again tried to drag the girl from him by force. Her

hands, which grasped her uncle's arm, gave way in the iron gripe of the workman. Mr. Dalton felt that if they were divided, she was lost, and, at length, giving way to the passion he had so long repressed, he raised his heavy walking stick to strike the fellow to the ground. But the movement was seen by others. A countryman sprang upon him, and, in an instant, wrenched it from his grasp.

During this scuffle, Graves, believing that the attention of the crowd was entirely engrossed by Mr. Dalton and his niece, thought it a favourable opportunity for him to endeavour to effect his escape. With this intention, he began gently to push his way through a knot of women on his right hand. But, at this moment, one of his discarded workmen got sight of him, and perceiving his intention, when he had advanced a few paces from Mr. Dalton, he roared out, in a voice of thunder—

"Stop that rascal, there—that is Graves —seize him, I say."

In a moment, the name of the banker was echoed from every part of the throng.

"Where is Graves?—we want Graves," seemed to reverberate on every side.

"I bet you a guinea we have him here, for the coward trembles from head to foot," cried a stout pitman, from the country, who held him fast by the shoulders.

"That is his conscience makes him shake," responded another, at a little distance.

"His conscience!—he never had one," roared a third, and then there was a general burst of laughter.

"Let me see him, and I will soon tell whether it is Graves, or not," crier a voice from the extremity of the crowd, which the banker, even in that confusion, recognized, with increased terror and consternation, to be the voice of Forrest. "Hold him fast till I get up to you," added the same speaker. "I have a lesson to give him, which he shall remember as long as he lives."

The struggles of Graves to escape now became absolutely furious. He struck with hands and feet around him on every side —he swore—he menaced, in far more fearful language than any used by his assailants. He felt it was a struggle for life or death.

But it availed him little. Sometimes he freed himself, for a moment, from the grasp of his enemies, and pushing past others, advanced a few paces nearer to the outskirts of the throng; but he was almost immediately again made prisoner, and the same combat was once more to begin. In the meantime, he heard the menaces of Forrest ever nearer and nearer, and every effort he made to escape, only seemed to lessen the distance between them.

In a brief space they met—face to face —as they had done so short a time before, in Mr. Graves's library.

When the eyes of Forrest fell upon the pale features, and battered person, of the banker, half-covered with mud, and abso-

lutely convulsed with terror, he laughed aloud.

"I told you yesterday, you should soon hear from me again!" he cried, "and Lucy has sent you this—and this—" and as he spoke, he raised a heavy horsewhip, and applied it again and again, with all his might, to the shoulders of Mr. Graves.

The banker sprang upon him, and endeavoured to wrest the weapon from his hands; but he was only one against hundreds; and when Forrest had given him a good horse whipping, he commanded the lookers-on to bind him, and carry him into the public house as a hostage. But the people, now roused to fury, had no intention of allowing him to be thus removed from the vengeance they had long vowed against him; but setting up a loud hurrah, they began to pelt him with mud, dead vegetables, and every thing they found in their way.

In the meantime, the efforts of Mr. Dalton to defend Amy from insult were

utterly useless. His stick was wrenched from his grasp—his hat was knocked from his head and trodden under foot and Amy was already torn from him, when he saw the tall, athletic figure of Seaton, accompanied by the landlord of the "Black Bull," forcing away, with irresistible energy, through the throng, towards the spot where he was still feebly struggling to prevent the girl being carried from him.

The bearing of Seaton was decisive and commanding; as putting aside the astonished people like one in authority, he cried, in a voice that was heard, even above the wild clamour of popular fury,

"Fools—fools! you know not what you do! Would you murder Mr. Dalton? Would you murder the friend and father of the people?"

A universal silence followed this appeal; all who heard it were astonished and bewildered, but knew not how to act.

It was a pause like that of the tide when it has reached its highest point. Seaton

saw his advantage, and lost not a moment in availing himself of it. Again he cried, aloud—

"If there are any of Mr. Dalton's workmen in the crowd—if there are either men or women here who have eaten the bread of his charity, when they were left by Graves to famish like hounds, let them gather round me; and woe to him who dares again to lay his hand again upon the father of the poor, or his young niece, Amy Seaton. Women, neighbours, friends—instead of obstructing the good man's passage with violence, let us give three cheers for Mr. Dalton, the friend and father of his workmen. Three cheers I say, for Mr. Dalton!"

As if by one accord, every creature assembled there, whether inhabitants of town or country, joined in one long and hearty acclamation. Amy, released by those who had dragged her from her uncle, and who, ashamed and dismayed, now slunk away amongst the crowd, was, in another mo-

ment, clasped in the arms of her brother, and fell, with a cry of delight, almost fainting on his shoulder.

"Sir, may I beg you will follow me," said Seaton, turning hastily to Mr. Dalton, and addressing him in the voice and manner of an entire stranger. "I will conduct you to a place of safety—but we have not a moment to lose."

Mr. Dalton looked at his nephew mournfully and earnestly. Even without Amy's wild cry of recognition, he should have known him, in defiance of the change wrought by time and sorrow in his appearance.

"Charles Seaton, I know you, and I thank you from my heart," he said. "I trust in you, and I will go whither you please to lead me."

This was a proud moment of triumph for the long persecuted man! The triumph of patient virtue and Christian forgiveness of injuries. In Mr. Dalton's mind, (who was now almost persuaded of his

nephew's innocence) remorse, mingled with gratitude, when he felt that he owed his life to Charles Seaton, from whom he served rather hatred and reproaches, for the years of unmerited disgrace and suffering he had caused him, though unintentionally, to endure.

Charles lifted Amy from the ground, without uttering another word, and bearing her in his arms, he begged the landlord, who stood beside him, and was well-known to most of the workmen around, to open a way for them through the dense crowd of people who seemed now, as eager to see and bless Mr. Dalton, as they had before been to attack him.

Fortunately, a diversion at this time occurred, which rendered his assistance almost unnecessary.

A loud hurrah, so loud that it must have been uttered by many hundred voices, burst suddenly from a neighbouring street. In the silence that followed, a sound like the regular marching of a

regiment was distinctly heard, passing down, by a back way, towards the granaries. The people, forgetting all by which they had recently been so variously excited, divided on all sides, and ran off at their utmost speed, down every avenue leading in the direction from whence these sounds proceeded, shouting, as they ran—

"They are coming—they are coming."

"The bands from the country are marching in," said the landlord of the Black Bull, turning towards Seaton, whilst his eyes sparkled with pleasure. "There will be warm work before long; and, thanks to the false news which was brought from another quarter this morning, the soldiers are gone on a fool's errand across the country, and there are scarcely any left to defend the property of Mr. Graves, and such as he. He will have more reason to remember to-day, than the few strokes of the whip that fellow Forrest

gave him. But he never had mercy on man, woman, nor child, when he had the power in his hands, so now let him look to himself, for his turn is come at last."

There was something ferocious in the expression of the landlord, as he uttered these words, which shocked and alarmed both Mr. Dalton and Seaton. But all remonstrance, on such a subject, would have been out of place.

"Are you quite sure that Mr. Graves's granary is to be the first attacked?" enquired Charles.

"They seem to be going that way," answered the landlord, drily, for though he had assisted in the rescue of Amy and Mr. Dalton, for old acquaintance sake, and a feeling of respect for the latter, he was not inclined to betray any of the proposed movements of the rebels. Every now and then, as they proceeded, he paused to listen, and his mind was so entirely engrossed by what was going on,

that he scarcely spoke another word to his companions. As soon as they reached a quiet street, and all danger of further molestation appeared at an end, he hastily wished them good morning, and without making any further answer to their repeated thanks for his assistance, than by merely touching his hat, he, too, ran off towards the scene of tumult.

Strange, indeed, were the feelings of Mr. Dalton, when he was thus left alone with the man, whom he had been accustomed, for long years, to regard as the murderer of his only child, and whose name, even, he had not permitted to be pronounced in his presence, but who now, by the strange mutability of human affairs, had become his protector and his guide.

"Mr. Seaton," he said, in a voice whose tones betrayed his emotion, "you cannot carry that poor girl much further in the state in which she is. Is there no place near where we can find shelter and rest,

and afford her such assistance as she requires. My house is too remote."

"There is a cottage, not five minutes' walk from hence, sir, on the edge of the common, where we should be joyfully received," replied Seaton, in a respectful, but agitated manner. "I left Miss Dalton there, when I came down into the town, in search of Amy, whose absence had caused us great uneasiness."

"That is well," answered Mr. Dalton, simply. "We can there remain together till the disturbances are over. The ladies must not venture again into the streets till all is tranquil."

Seaton answered not; but, with an anxious heart, hurried on towards old Molly's dwelling. He was anxious on Grace Dalton's account, whom he had left there alone; he was alarmed by the long swoon of his sister, who yet gave no signs of life, and yet, amidst these feelings, he marvelled greatly by what strange chance

Amy had come into Mr. Dalton's company, and what events could have occurred to render his uncle's manner so mild and indulgent towards him, when he had expected to be met with coldness and disdain, or even with the most virulent reproaches.

CHAPTER XI.

All persons who form an assembly of this kind, disregarding its probable effect, and the alarm and consternation that are likely to ensue, and all who give countenance and support to it, are criminal parties.

MR. JUSTICE HOLROYD.

ONLY a short time elapsed before Seaton and his companions reached old Molly's dwelling, and no sooner did Grace Dalton hear her cousin's voice, than she withdrew the bolts within to give him admission.

She uttered a cry of consternation and surprise, when she saw the drooping figure

of Amy in his arms, but her astonishment was still greater, when Mr. Dalton followed him into the cottage, his dress torn and in disorder, his white hair uncovered, and his countenance still expressing the most fearful agitation and excitement, far different from his usual melancholy tranquillity.

But when her uncle kindly took her hand in his, and told her to be of good cheer, for all would soon go well, her feelings completely overpowered her, and she burst into tears.

"Grace, dearest, do not weep," said Seaton, gazing at her with unutterable affection, "there is no longer cause for anxiety. Help me to lay Amy on the bed. She has been terrified, but, I trust, not hurt, and she is already recovering,"

"And my uncle, my dear uncle, has he also been in danger?" she eagerly demanded.

"He owes his life, and that of this young girl, to Seaton's courage and energy," replied the old man, in trembling accents;

"nay more," he added, whilst tears almost choked his utterance, "he owes his life to his nephew's noble generosity and forgiveness. Yes, Grace, help to revive poor Amy! she is worth saving, and then I will tell you all. But I, too, have need of rest, after the scene we have escaped from;" and he sat down near a table, and leaned his head upon his hand, as if all strength had forsaken him.

"Charles, give him water—there is nothing else to be found here," cried Grace, eagerly, whilst occupied with Amy, who now lay on the bed, and as she spoke, she pointed to a pitcher of water under the dresser.

Seaton immediately obeyed her, and carried a cup-ful to Mr. Dalton.

The old man took it with a trembling hand, and gazing earnestly on his nephew, said,

"Charles, is it indeed possible, that you bear me no enmity?"

"I never blamed you, sir," he replied,

"you were deceived, and your sufferings, and your injuires, were not less than mine."

"Noble, generous fellow!" returned Mr. Dalton, "though much is still unexplained, I can no longer doubt your innocence."

"Thanks be to Heaven for its exceeding mercy," exclaimed Charles. "Thanks be to Heaven, that I have lived to hear such words from your lips, and may its choicest blessings be your reward."

Grace bowed down her head upon the bed, and wept in unutterable joy, and though Amy had not yet spoken, she was sufficiently recovered to hear what was said, and she pressed the hand of her cousin in hers, as a sign that she participated in her happiness.

Those who have never known the sorrow, the trial, and the agony, of long estrangement from the objects of their best affections, can scarcely understand the deep, the holy joy, which then filled the hearts of all the inmates of the cottage. The

sufferings of the past, their mutual mistrust, were obliterated, and the spirit of pure, confiding love, replaced them to sanctify, and to exalt, above all petty feelings of individual interest.

There was a solemn pause of silence for more than five minutes. It was a pause of devotion and thanksgiving.

"My children," said Mr. Dalton, at length, arising, and approaching the bed, "it is fitting that I should now explain to you, that it is not gratitude alone, which has caused my sudden change of conduct to my injured nephew. Strange things had come to light to-day, before we met in the wild throng. The ways of Providence are indeed wonderful."

"Had you received proofs of Charles's innocence?" demanded Grace, eagerly.

"You shall hear," replied Mr. Dalton, and Amy, whose faintness had now almost entirely passed away, sat up in her bed, to listen to her uncle's narrative. "This morning early," he continued, "I received,

with astonishment, a visit from the first jeweller in the town. But how much greater was my amazement, when, after a slight apology for his intrusion, he laid before me fifty sovereigns, all bearing the mark of the little cross, which was on those stolen from the bank."

"Good Heaven!—how could they possibly have come into his hands?" exclaimed Seaton, eagerly.

"Three similarly marked had already been brought to me, some weeks ago," resumed Mr. Dalton, without noticing this exclamation. "It was not long after your return, Charles Seaton, and I confess to you, that prejudiced as I was against you, I immediately suspected that they came from your hands. But before long, I was led, by Providence—I will not say by accident—to be the invisible witness of a scene, in a poor sick man's chamber, which sufficed to convince me of your innocence, and to awaken suspicions of another, in my mind, which were no more to be put

to rest. Those three sovereigns, and the fifty I have seen to-day, can all be traced to the same person."

"I need not ask to whom," answered Seaton. "The mystery has long been clear to me!"

"The three sovereigns were issued from the Savings' Bank, of which Mr. Graves is the director," said Mr. Dalton; "the fifty were paid yesterday evening, by Martha Graves herself, to the jeweller."

"No doubt without her husband's knowledge," returned Charles.

"That is probable. The jeweller confessed he had found considerable difficulty in obtaining money from Mrs. Graves, and that after several times putting him off, she came at a late hour with the sum in question. The whole affair will be soon made clear, for the law must take its course, and the officers of justice will proceed to-day, with a proper warrant to Mr. Graves's house. It is fearful to think how long the innocent have suffered for the guilty. But

now, my dear nephew, prompt reparation must be made. Those who stole this gold, were, I cannot doubt, guilty of the whole dark plot—were the authors of my child's death, and your ruin, by which they hoped to screen themselves. I see it all clearly now, and I cannot wait for the slow progress of the law before I acknowledge your innocence, and the fearful injustice of which I have been guilty towards you. No sooner was I again left alone than I hurried to your lodging, Grace, to tell you all—but you had already gone out. They said it was possible you had gone to the Gibson's. Thither I proceeded in search of you. But I found only your young cousin, Amy, sitting like an angel of charity by the sick man's side. Having already received alarming information concerning the state of the town, I could not allow her to return home alone, and we came away together. By an evil chance we encountered Graves, who joined us. I will not speak of my feelings towards him, as he per-

sisted in walking at my side, and talking with hypocritical servility. He was recognized, and the people's hatred of him no doubt occassioned the tumult from which you rescued us."

"I had gone in search of Amy, and of another person, whose evidence would alone suffice to establish my innocence," answered Seaton, "when from the upper windows of the Black Bull public house, I recognized you, and my sister, in the midst of the enraged throng. I saw that those around you were workmen from the country to whom you were unknown, or you would never have been thus insulted, and calling the landlord to my aid, I hastened to your assistance. As it proved, I had only to pronounce your name, to rescue you from danger. Why did you not tell them sooner, sir, who you were?"

"I never thought that would help me," replied Mr. Dalton. "Poor creatures, they know not what they do! There will be much loss of life I fear before the day is

over, and yet their cause will only be injured by the dreadful sacrifice."

"There is no fear of their coming towards the common," said Seaton, after listening for a time to the sounds of tumult which the wind brought from the lower town. "And if you, sir, will kindly remain with my sister and Miss Dalton here, I will go down, and see what is going on."

It was in vain that the ladies endeavoured to dissuade him from this resolution, for as he doubted not that Forrest, and perhaps Lucy herself, were in the middle of the fray, he determined at all hazards to go in search of them.

At this moment a deafening acclamation raised by the people, was audible even to those in Molly's dwelling. Then a thin line of smoke arose over the houses which lay at the foot of the hill between them and the scene of the tumult. Gradually it thickened and widened, till it rolled up in dark volumes like clouds upon the air.

"They have set fire to the granary,"

said Seaton, who with Mr. Dalton was gazing anxiously from the window.

"There are no military, it appears, to interrupt them," was the reply. "The barracks are at least a mile off, and they have not had time to arrive."

Again there was a long, loud shout of furious triumph, as the flames shot up through the roof of the building.

"I must be gone!" exclaimed Seaton. "May Heaven protect you all till I return!"

And without waiting to hear another word of expostulation, he pressed the hand of Grace in his, and darted from the house.

They saw him run down the hill at full speed, and then disappear between the houses of the narrow street leading towards the disturbed quarter of the town. Amy remembering the horrible situation from whence she had so recently escaped, and dreading that her brother must inevitably be involved in even greater danger, wept with uncontrolled violence. Neither

Mr. Dalton, nor Grace, attempted to comfort her. They had also fearful apprehensions; not for Charles alone, but for the consequences of such lawless and unchecked fury to the peaceful inhabitants of the town, and to the poor misguided people, who after long suffering with patience and submission, had now burst forth like a compressed flood that breaks its barriers, to ravage all before them.

The spectacle which presented itself to Seaton, when he entered a narrow street, across the further end of which stretched the granary and store-houses belonging to Mr. Graves, was fearful to behold.

Injustice, hunger, disease, and despair, had wrought the people to the wildest fury. Reason had lost all power over their passions. Yet the anger of the throng, like that of an enraged individual, scarcely knew on what to wreak its violence. Women of the lowest class shrieked and yelled, as if possessed by some demoniac spirit, as they bore straw and faggots to swell the

fires, which were destined to consume the property of Graves. Tall and powerful men from the founderies, others pale and haggard with famine, were breaking in the doors and windows of the store-houses, whilst women and children, who had already obtained entrance by some other way, came running down the street, laden with baskets of corn, or sacks of flour upon their backs, upon their heads, or under their arms, calling to others to make haste and get what they could before all was carried off, or burnt.

The dense throng in some parts, the hurried running to and fro in others, the unwonted agitation and excitement of the people, whose every motion betrayed intensity of passion, the various and ragged garments, and above all the wild expression of every face in that scene of confusion and tumult, presented a spectacle at the same time picturesque and terrible.

Once or twice Seaton caught glimpses of Forrest, acting as a leader to about a dozen

of the strongest and most desperate of Graves's workmen, who were resolved to be revenged on their infamous master for the sufferings of themselves, their families, and their fellow labourers, of which they regarded him as the cause; and for the insolent tyranny with which he had long insulted them. Readily they obeyed the commands of a man, who of desperate fortunes, and careless of life, wrought nearly to madness by the story of his sister's wrongs, had sworn that day to take a full and complete revenge upon the wretch who had caused her ruin.

Forrest was indeed admirably calculated for the chief of such a riot. Better born and better bred than those by whom he was surrounded, he was possessed of considerable talents, and when roused was energetic and decided. It was by his foresight, that the military had been called off, by false intelligence, to another quarter; under his direction, the whole plan of the attack had been arranged, and materials

for the conflagration secretly deposited in several of the neighbouring houses, from whence, with the utmost promptitude and despatch, they were now carried into various parts of the buildings belonging to Graves.

The flames which had been seen by Seaton, whilst at Molly's cottage, only proceeded from an outhouse at some distance, which had been prematurely set fire to. The principal conflagration had not yet commenced.

Forrest was anxious that the half famished people should save as much of the provisions contained in Graves's store houses as possible, before they were destroyed, and delayed therefore, to afford them time for plunder, before he gave the signal of destruction. But dreading lest the military should be shortly upon them, soon after Charles had reached the scene of strife, he gave a long, loud, piercing whistle, and in another moment more than a dozen fires burst forth, at once, in various parts of the extensive building.

It was still swarming with women and children, who had listened to no warning, and would obey no command to depart; but no sooner did they see the flames mounting with incredible velocity, around them, fanned by the various currents from the open doors and windows, than with piercing screams, they rushed towards the stairs and different avenues, pushing, shrieking, falling, treading over one another, and forgetting every idea of plunder, in their eager desire to escape.

It was a magnificent spectacle, that vast and unimpeded conflagration; rushing up with the might and the roar of a volcano, into the still clear air, surrounded by a vast circle of eager and passionate faces, all gazing at it with delight, and exulting in the sense of power and success. Not a word was uttered. Even the authors of this vast destruction seemed awe struck by the violence of the raging element they had let loose. Suddenly the roll of drums was distinctly heard, louder than all the

noise of the tumult, from a street to the right where every object was hidden by the dense smoke, and almost at the same moment, an officer on horseback, with the mayor of the town at his side, at the head of a company of infantry, and about a dozen dragoons, came round a corner, at not more than three hundred yards distance, from the spot where Seaton stood. At this moment, to his utter astonishment, some one laid a hand on his arm, and addressed him by name. He turned and saw James Carr.

"Come away, sir," he said, "this is no place for us, now the military are here."

"But I would fain see the end of it, and ascertain the fate of Forrest," answered Charles, quietly.

"We can do that, without running the risk of being shot as rebels," was the reply, "if you will follow me."

"Lead on then! I will go where you please," returned Seaton, wisely considering, that he had no desire to incur the

danger of being supposed an actor in that tumultuous and lawless scene.

There was not a moment to lose, and they ran as fast as they could, between the scattered mob, to Gibson's house, which was close at hand, and from whence Carr had recognized Seaton amidst the crowd. They had just time to spring within the door, and draw the bolts on the inside, before the military passed by.

The shutters of the kitchen window were closed and barred, so that they were in total darkness.

"Here are the stairs, sir," cried Carr, "follow me, we shall see everything from the garret above," and with all the speed they could use in the obscurity, they clambered up the narrow steps.

Such was the excitement of the scene passing without, that even poor Gibson had arisen from his bed, to gaze with his wife on the tumult. He already knew that it was Mr. Seaton, whom Carr had gone to bring from the street, and convinced of his

innocence, since the affair of the sovereigns, he welcomed him with civility and kindness.

"I am glad you have got back again," the sick man said to Carr, "for there will soon be warm work below. The mayor is reading the Riot Act, but they only laugh at him. The women are the worst of all."

"Mr. Seaton—Mr. Seaton!" cried Carr, eagerly; "there is Lucy Forrest, one of the very first of them. There she is—standing next her brother, waving an old shawl for a flag."

"Poor wretch, it is frightful to see how she is fallen," was Charles's reply. "It is impossible for us now to get her away, and her brother is no doubt glad to have her there to keep up the fury of the people."

"They are reading the Riot Act for the third time," said Gibson, "but the mob does not move. The soldiers will fire next, to a certainty."

"Listen! there come the fire engines!" cried Seaton, and a deep, heavy rumbling was heard coming up a street unoccupied by the crowd, and leading to the back of the granary.

The people likewise heard it, and suddenly turning, with a long, loud shout of defiance, they fell in a large body on the firemen and the little party of police who accompanied them as a guard, drove them back, and broke the first fire-engine into a hundred pieces.

All this was the work of a few seconds; and they were about to make a similar attack on the second, when the officer at the head of the soldiers, called out to them to desist, at peril of their lives.

"All legal formalities are now fulfilled," he said, in a loud, clear voice, "the progress of the flames must be stopped, and if you do not, at once, desist from violence, and quickly disperse, I shall most unwillingly be compelled to command my men to fire."

But no one harkened to him; the fury of the mob had reached too wild a height, to be suddenly quelled by any sense of prudence, or fear of danger. Success had maddened them, and with a hoarse laugh of derision they discharged the few guns they had against the soldiery, accompanied by a shower of stones; and then brandishing the hammers, pick-axes, scythes, pikes, and such other weapons as they carried, with a shout of defiance they rushed forward in a dense mass, as a regiment in a regular battle would have charged with the bayonet.

Those in authority, could no longer hesitate—the fatal word was spoken.

"Fire!" and in one moment, more than fifty flashes glanced from the military ranks, and the roll of the muskets reverberated loud and long amidst the houses, whilst a light smoke curled up above the heads of the combatants.

There was a momentary pause of consternation. Forrest was the first to per-

ceive that no one was wounded; the soldiers had only fired with blank cartridges, —and though a few women and children fled, the greatest part of the mob, with undaunted courage, stood firm; and animated by the renewed exhortations of their leader, prepared for a second attack.

Again their guns were loaded and discharged; some of the most audacious endeavoured to wrench their weapons from several soldiers in the foremost rank, before they were prepared to fire, whilst a party, which had run round by narrow lanes and alleys, attacked the military in the rear with stones and other missiles.

Again the colonel gave the fatal word; again the discharge of the guns burst simultaneously on the air, like the roll of a single cannon; this time it was answered by wild and fearful shrieks of agony and death.

More than a dozen persons had fallen, dead or wounded, amongst the insurgents. With wild cries of terror the mob now

fled in all directions, pursued by the military.

In a few minutes, the streets which had so recently been thronged with thousands of the combatants, were deserted by all but the firemen, who were playing their engines on the burning store-houses, and the wounded or dead, who lay bleeding and motionless on the ground.

CHAPTER XII.

What deep wounds ever closed without a scar!
The heart's bleed longest, and but heal to wear
That which disfigures it; and they who war
With their own hopes, and have been vanquished, bear
Silence, but not submission; in his lair,
Fix'd passion holds his breath, until the hour,
Which shall atone for years; none need despair.
It came—it cometh—and will come—the power
To punish or forgive.

BYRON.

LUCY FORREST was one of the victims of the fray. No sooner had the crowd passed

away from the street before Gibson's house, than Charles Seaton recognized her lying on the middle of the pavement. He immediately requested Carr to assist him in removing her, whether dead or alive. Gibson proposed that they should bring the body there—but he declined the offer.

"It was too near the scene of the combat," he said, "and the house would probably be searched; but he requested the loan of a mattress in case the woman was yet living. This was granted; and with all haste Seaton and Carr carried it down into the kitchen, where they laid it out on an old shutter they found in a chimney corner.

Seaton then unbarred the door and looked cautiously out. Not a creature was to be seen, from whom they had anything to fear. The sounds of the tumult were already distant—the firemen fully engaged with their work, had gone round to the other side of the building, where the flames were raging fiercest.

"The moment is favourable," said Sea-

ton, to his companion. "We must bring her here at once."

And without hesitating longer, they both stepped out into the street.

The unfortunate Lucy was lying in a state of total insensibility. Her head rested on her left arm, so as entirely to conceal her face; her right hand was pressed upon her side. Her long, dark hair—from which hat and cap had been torn in the tumult—hung in tangled masses over her shoulders. When Seaton raised the heavy tresses, he found they were saturated with blood.

But there was no time to examine her wounds, and silently the men aided each other, with mutual understanding, to lift her from the ground. Her head fell against Seaton's shoulder as they passed their arms around her; but when her face was thus exposed to view, they both saw that she yet lived. She had only fainted from pain and loss of blood.

No one observed them as they bore the

wretched creature into Gibson's cottage, except, perhaps, some of the poor inhabitants of the neighbouring houses, who only lacked the courage, but not the will, to lend similar assistauce to the wounded.

When they had brought her into the kitchen, they laid her on the mattress they had previously prepared, and Carr again secured the entrance.

"What is to be done now, sir?" he then enquired.

"We must get away with all speed," returned Seaton. "We will go out by the back door to the footpath leading between the gardens to Molly Temple's. No one will look for her there."

"You are right, sir," answered the workman. "The soldiers have enough to do in the streets, and the hedges are so high on both sides, that we shall never be seen till we get to the edge of the common; and besides, sir, even the soldiers would let a woman pass quietly in such a state."

"First set open the back door, and then

come and help me to carry her," was Seaton's reply.

All being in readiness, they then lifted their burthen, Carr walking first, and Seaton bearing the upper end. They had covered the face of the wounded with a light handkerchief.

In this way they proceeded in silence, but with rapid steps, along the narrow path between the edges, which terminated in a steep ascent towards the common.

When they had half climbed the hill, they first paused to take breath.

It was a calm and lovely autumn day. The sun was shining without a cloud above their heads, diffusing a golden light over the many tinted woods—the air, refreshed by the recent rains, was balmy with the odour of flowers, and the scent of falling leaves—the birds were fluttering and chirping in the hedges—the bees were humming their farewell song in the gardens. The peaceful beauty of the scene, contrasted strangely with the sad burthen of

Charles and his companion, and yet, more so with the tempest of human passions, they had so lately witnessed. And they both felt this.

"It is very different here, sir," said the workman, in a low voice, as he gazed a moment around him. "It is a pity it should ever be otherwise."

"The time may come, perhaps, though not in our lives, James, when all men may think so," answered Charles. "We cannot call ourselves civilized, as long as sufferings exist, which drive men to seek their remedy by violence. But many things have been changed, in laws, and in opinions, since we were young, and many more will be changed in the next fifty years. War was fomerly men's passion and glory; but commerce has taught them now the advantages of peace, and they are seeking how to make it perpetual."

"Oh, sir," answered Carr, "if there was no oppression, nor injustice, there would be no war. These poor people, to-

day, have only been driven to violence by the corn tax, and Graves's tyranny and vices. If they had not been half starved, in order to put large unjust profits into the pockets of another class, they would never have taken up arms. I don't want to touch property, sir; but many like me, think it is very unjust, that those who have property cannot be content with their own, but seek to double it at the expense of labouring men, by taxes, and places, and protection for their corn, and protection for their sugar, and twice as much interest for their capital in manufactures, as their grandfathers got before them. One never hears of decent profits, now-a-days; a man is either a bankrupt, or lives like a prince, as Graves has done, at the cost of hundreds of poor sufferers."

"Masters have also great risks," answered Seaton, "and habits of expense and luxury induce them to gamble like Graves. His example may be a warning to others of

his class, and this poor victim we carry, and the others we have left behind in the street, may teach the people they can gain nothing by lawless disturbances."

"They would not listen to reason till blood was shed," answered Carr, "but for the future they will lay to heart what you said to them in the loft. But here we are at the edge of the common. There is a man going towards the town, we had better wait here till he has passed."

They did so accordingly, drawing back as far as possible behind the hedge to conceal themselves.

Lucy had never moved nor given the slightest sign of life, and Seaton began to fear that if assistance were not promptly afforded her, she might never more revive. He rejoiced therefore, when he saw the common clear of all passengers, so that they might venture to pass without further delay to Molly Temple's back door.

Again they set off, even more rapidly

than before, and ere they arrived at the cottage they saw the old woman open the door, and look out.

Molly had returned home, soon after the departure of Seaton, and now full of trouble and anxiety on his account, she was watching for his return.

Great was her astonishment when she saw him and Carr approaching with the bier. With silent rapidity they entered the cottage, where Grace, Mr. Dalton and Amy still were.

"It is Lucy Forrest," said Seaton; "she is desperately wounded, and must have immediate help."

The agitation of Mr. Dalton was extreme when he heard these words, for during the absence of Seaton he had learnt from old Molly, that his child was positively not in the house at the time of the fire, and he knew that no one but this woman could inform him of its real fate.

Eagerly therefore, he lent every assistance in his power to lay her on the bed,

and at once sent Carr away in search of one of the first surgeons in the town. Old Molly, who, during her campaign in India, had been employed in the hospital, and had some experience in the treatment of gun-shot wounds, with quiet celerity examined the state of the unfortunate Lucy. She removed the shawl and gown from her shoulders, and cut off the tresses of her long, dishevelled hair. A wound in the front of the right shoulder then became visible, but whether dangerous or not, Molly was incapable of deciding. It was still bleeding externally, and the old woman washed it, and bound it up, as well as she could. She then applied the usual means for the revival of the fainting woman.

At the end of a quarter of an hour Lucy began to show signs of life. She moved her hand, and she swallowed a little water, which Grace Dalton held to her lips. The surgeon soon afterwards arrived.

After examining the wound, he spoke

aside with Mr. Dalton, and informed him, that from the direction the ball had taken there was every reason to suppose it would not prove fatal. That it had passed out at the back, and that he trusted no serious inflammation would take place. When informed of Lucy's previous state of mind and habits of life, he expressed his opinion that the loss of blood might render her faculties perfectly clear, at least for a time. What was most to be dreaded was fever, he said, as much in consequence of the violent excitement she had previously been in as from the wound. He then administered such restoratives as he considered necessary, and desiring that unless she spoke herself, she might not be disturbed, he took his departure.

Mr. Dalton at once declared his intention to remain there, till every hope of obtaining some tidings of his lost child from Lucy, was entirely at an end. As long as he believed it dead, he had in some measure become accustomed to his despair, but now

when an idea had been excited in his mind that it might yet be living, that it might yet be restored to him, the agony of his suspense as he gazed on the livid countenance of her on whose power of utterance he believed the future happiness or misery of his life depended, was almost insupportable.

Pale as a corpse, the poor creature lay upon the widow's bed, motionless—except when a slight convulsion betrayed the pain she suffered. Mr. Dalton sometimes stood with his arms folded, intently gazing at her; at others walked up and down the little room with impatient anxiety. Those who have witnessed such a scene, can never forget it.

This lasted several hours, and the day was drawing to a close when old Molly, having once more poured a part of the medicine down Lucy's throat, she suddenly revived, and grasping the old woman's hand, feebly asked her to raise her up in the bed.

This done with the assistance of Grace, Lucy for the first time unclosed her eyes, and gazed around her, as if awakening from a trance.

"Where am I?" she murmured. "Mr. Seaton, Mr. Dalton! both here! and they look kindly at me! Oh God—oh God, when I deserve their curses!"

"Lucy!" said Seaton, gently taking her hand, "we pity, and forgive you."

"But Mr. Dalton, he can never forgive," she murmured, hiding her face in her hands. "He can never pardon the loss of his pretty child."

"If you will tell the truth," said the father, eagerly, "if you will tell me now—even now, what was its real fate—if it lives, Lucy—I can pardon much to a repentant sinner."

"Oh sir, I will tell you all—all," she faintly returned, "if life is spared to me. But oh, what have I done—what have I done! lost, lost creature that I am! I am

dying! I know I am dying, and there is no hope for me. It is too late—it is too late!"

"It is never too late to repent, and pray for forgiveness, for the mercy of the Almighty is great as His power," said Seaton, with solemnity.

"Oh, bitterly do I repent, bitterly have I long repented," she replied, "and long have I wished to come and humble myself in the dust before you, Mr. Dalton, but I had not the courage."

"But my child, Lucy?" cried the father, no longer able to govern his impatience, "I know it did not perish in the flames!"

"Who told you that!" she eagerly demanded.

"No matter!" he replied. "Tell me at once, does it yet survive?" And every limb of Mr. Dalton trembled, as he pronounced these hurried words.

"Oh! no, no, no! they told me long ago that it was dead, or I should have come to you before now!"

"Who told you it was dead?" cried the poor father, with trembling accents.

"Forrest, Forrest! my brother told me so!" she replied. "I gave it to him to save it on the night of the fire—but let me rest—I must try to remember clearly. A mist has passed from my mind, but I am faint—very faint. Give me water—water—oh the pain!"

Eagerly Mr. Dalton himself held a reviving draught to the poor creature's lips, who swallowed it with avidity. For a moment afterwards she gazed at him with an expression of unutterable gratitude.

"God bless you, sir," she said, and then closing her eyes, she remained silent several minutes.

"I am strong again, now," she murmured at length, suddenly looking up, "and I must unburthen my mind. Thanks be to God that he has sent you here, gentlemen, to listen and to pardon. Mr. Seaton, I may tell you now, it was a bitter pain to me that you only—whom I had loved when you were a

boy—of all the gentlemen in the bank, seemed disposed to slight and despise me. Graves flattered me—he gave me money for dress—and I was soon in his power. We often met secretly—and the night he meant to rob and set fire to the bank, he bid me persuade Molly to sleep out of the house. I did not know what dreadful thoughts he had in his head. He said I must come down to meet him as usual, without the child, under the trees in St. Peter's Church-yard. But I refused to leave the child alone in the house. He offered me ten guineas—twenty guineas—nay, fifty guineas, if I would do what he asked. But I still refused. Men cannot understand the love a woman feels for the child she nurses. Mr. Graves was too hard for that; and he still insisted I should leave the child by itself. I told him then, I would not come at all. He was in a terrible rage and told me it was too late for me to pretend to disobey his commands. He said I should perish and the child too,

if I did not come to him—for it was intended to burn down the bank he had found out that very night. He said I was a fool to think he meant the child any harm, only he wanted to make a merit to Mr. Dalton of saving its life ; and he would give me a hundred guineas if I would leave it behind me, and come down to him."

"And Charles Seaton was no partner in the plot ?" inquired Mr. Dalton.

"He knew no more of it, than the angels in Heaven," returned Lucy.

"Oh, woman—woman! great is your need of repentance—for fearful is the wrong you have done!" exclaimed the old gentleman. "Why then, were you so abandoned as to accuse him of crimes you knew another had committed ?"

"I was nearly mad with fear after the fire," she returned. "Mr. Graves swore to accuse me of the robbery and bring me to the gallows, if I refused to obey

him in all things. He told me that Mr. Seaton mocked me and despised me; and that it was folly to bring myself to shame and death for such a fellow as that. From that moment I was lost—entirely lost! But oh! the pain—turn me a little, or I cannot bear it."

When she had been assisted to move her position—and had again swallowed a spoonful of the cordial, she revived.

"I will tell you the rest," she then said. "You must not think I was so wicked as to be bribed by gold, to leave the poor babe. I did not trust in Graves's promises to save it. I knew he and his wife had often wished it dead, that they might be Mr. Dalton's heirs. I took fifty pounds he put into my hands, and promised all he wished. He told me I was to say I forgot the child in my terror of the flames."

"Monster!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton, "this is too dreadful."

"Yes, sir, those were his words! But, oh! the pain—the pain! I must be quick or I shall not live to tell you all."

And she absolutely writhed with agony, whilst heavy groans burst from her lips. It was a sight to move the compassion of the hardest heart. In about five minutes the pains diminished and she again spoke—

"Yes, I took the money—but I resolved to save the child," she said, eagerly. "I am no murderer! I wrote to my brother to come into the town. I met him—and told him lies—more lies; I gave him the child before I went to meet Graves, and told him it was my own; and that I was handsomely paid by the father for its maintenance. I gave him all the money. It was the wages of blood, and I could not keep it."

"Good Heavens!" cried Seaton, "and this was Forrest—the same man who, afterwards, brought out my young sister to Sydney?"

"The same," replied Lucy. "I re
mended him to Mr. Graves, when he wa
to get rid of little Amy Seaton. H
ceived a certain sum in hand for ta
charge of her; and Mr. Graves eng
to remit him as much more if she ar
safe at the end of the voyage, whic
did."

"But what became of my poor ch
once more demanded Mr. Dalton.

"The night I gave it to my brothe
took it home. He carried it with him
he left England, and I gave him wl
could to pay its expenses—for I th
then, there was no more danger of
found out. He wrote, from Sydney, t
me it died on the voyage."

"Oh, yes, I remember it well,"
Amy, eagerly, "Did I not tell you, G
about the little girl I played with on
of ship—and who died and was throw
the sea?"

"So end all my hopes," said the ber
father. "Better had they never be

vived—if I have only learned my child was saved from the flames, to know that its little bones have long been buried beneath the waters of the great deep. Fool—fool, that I was, after so many years of despair, to let Hope steal into my heart!"

And the old man bowed his head upon his hand to conceal the agony of his troubled countenance,

"No doubt that is your sister, Mr. Seaton," said Lucy, looking earnestly at Amy, for some moments after the girl had spoken.

Old Molly watched her in the meantime, with an inquisitive eye.

"It is strange—very strange!" muttered Lucy; and then exhausted, she sunk back upon the pillows and closed her eyes.

"What is strange?" eagerly demanded the widow, coming close up to the bedside, and laying her hand on the cold fin-

gers of the sufferer. "Tell me what is strange, Lucy ?"

But Lucy made no reply. She seemed not to hear the question which had been put to her, and lay as if the stupor of death were stealing over her.

She had been in this state nearly a quarter of an hour, when Carr returned from the town. He brought tidings that the rebels had been totally dispersed by the military, but only after several lives had been lost on both sides. The granary and store-houses of Mr. Graves had been entirely consumed as well as several dwellings belonging to him in the neighbourhood. He rejoiced, he said, to be able to say, that not one of Mr. Dalton's workmen had borne any part in the disturbances. Even those who had been in the loft the night before had not joined the rioters. Several of the ring-leaders, and those who had been the foremost in attacking the soldiers, had been arrested, but as far as he had

been able to ascertain Forrest was not amongst the number.

Lucy seemed to hear the last piece of intelligence, for she looked up, and faintly pronounced her brother's name. Mr. Dalton, still sat lost in thought, till, at length, Seaton ventured to approach him, and as there was now no hope of learning anything further from the dying woman, he endeavoured to persuade him to return to his home.

Mr. Dalton arose, and looked long and earnestly in Charles's face, whilst his own countenance expressed the most agitated feelings.

"My nephew! my dear nephew!" he said, "I owe you large reparation. My sufferings have been great, but nothing compared to yours. We have both been the victims of a scoundrel, but I thank Heaven that I have lived to do you justice. None, but the noblest of human beings as you are, could have acted as you have

to-day towards one who had inflicted on you such cruel wrong as I had done."

"You were deceived by appearances, sir," answered Seaton. "I knew that your heart was just and noble towards all men, but such a web of falsehood had been woven around you, that even your strong sense could not burst it asunder."

"But Grace—your own loved and faithful Grace resisted!" replied the old man. "Her strong affection was proof against all slander, and confided in your innocence, without doubt and without wavering, whilst I—fool that I was—condemned her for a fidelity that was justly founded on her perfect knowledge of your noble character. You are worthy of each other, my children, and there is no spectacle on earth so beautiful as such a love as yours; long tried and faithful, and confiding to the last. As I once condemned it, so now I join your hands together, and call down the blessing of heaven upon the union of two most virtuous hearts."

As Mr. Dalton thus spoke, he placed the hand of Grace Dalton in that of his nephew.

"May years of future happiness," he added, "atone to both of you for the sufferings of the past."

Whilst he thus spoke there was something more than earthly in the expression of the noble and benevolent countenance of the old man. The spirits of love and charity seemed to beam from his mild eyes, and to pervade his noble, venerable figure, as, with no hope for himself, except beyond the grave, he implored for others the happiness he could never more enjoy upon earth.

Seaton thanked him in broken words, and Grace bent down, and kissed his withered hand, whilst tears fell from her eyes.

"My more than father," she said, "our blessings will attend you to the end of life, and loving you as your children, we shall

yet I trust be permitted to bring comfort to your old age."

"And my pretty Amy is not forgotten," said the old man, with a kind smile, as he held out his hand towards her. "She and I have been to-day in scenes of trouble together, and I trust for the future she will sit by my hearth and enliven my old age, as kindly as she has sought to alleviate the the sorrows of others. It seems to me, my child, we know each other, as well already, as if we had been all our lives together."

"Grace and my brother had long taught me to love you, sir," replied the girl, blushing deeply.

"But now, my dear uncle," said Seaton, interposing, "might it not be well for you to think of returning home. Amy, with your permission, will accompany you, for you have both had much fatigue and excitement. Grace and I will remain here, and watch by Lucy's bedside. "The

surgeon promised to return to-night, and if he then pronounces her out of danger, we will also leave her to Molly' scare."

"But Grace is weary and exhausted," said Mr. Dalton, "I can remain here, and let her go with Amy."

But Grace would not agree to this arrangement, and Mr. Dalton, yielding to their persuasions, wished them, unwillingly, farewell. He then drew Amy's arm through his, and left the cottage, accompanied by Carr, by way of escort.

He would not allow his young niece to think of returning to Grace's lodgings, and insisted that, thenceforward, she should take up her residence under his roof.

"Grace and Seaton will be united," he said, "and you and I must live together. You are the namesake of my lost child, and you shall supply her place to me."

Amy thanked him, and assured him of her love and gratitude. James Carr

heard all that passed, with a rejoicing heart, for he trusted now that the afflictions of the family were past, and that the declining years of his old master might end in peace, in the society of his affectionate and virtuous relatives.

The good workman parted with them at the door of Mr. Dalton's house, and then hurried, with impatient steps, to his own home, with the proud consciousness of having prevented many of his friends and companions from joining in the riots, and saved them from all the misfortunes they must have incurred by a participation in such lawless violence.

CHAPTER XIII.

'Tis said that their last parting was pathetic,
As partings often are, or ought to be,
And their presentiment was quite prophetic,
That they should never more each other see.

BYRON.

THE sudden dispersion of the mob, by which Graves and Mr. Dalton had been attacked, on the arrival of the bands from the country, had enabled three or four policemen to make their way to the banker, and rescue him from the hands of his assailants, but not until he had received a very severe castigation.

He was, indeed, in a most deplorable condition. His hat was gone—his clothes nearly torn from his back—and he was still enduring keen agony, from the strokes of Forrest's horsewhip.

Ashamed to pass through the streets in such a condition, and perhaps fearful of a second attack, he took refuge in the nearest house, where admission could be found, and sent from thence in search of a carriage to convey him home. When he arrived there, Mrs. Graves was out paying visits, in order to discover, if possible, the cause of the extraordinary reception given her at the ball, the night before.

Content to escape her observations and questions, he hurried, at once, to his bedroom, and there endeavoured to obliterate, as quickly as possible, the traces of the insults he had received.

He had previously resolved to depart on the following day, but he now determined to escape from the scene of his disgrace that very night. He had already taken as

much money as he could withdraw from the bank; he expected, at three o'clock, to receive payment for his corn and granary, and no obstacle, whatever, appeared to exist to prevent his departure. He calculated that he could arrive at Liverpool, time enough on the following morning, to sail with the regular steam-packet for America.

He then began to pack a carpet bag, with a few necessaries for his journey. The first thing he deposited therein, was a small, square box, containing his wife's jewels, which he considered too valuable to be left in her possession.

At that moment, he was startled by a violent knocking at his chamber door.

"Mr. Graves—Mr. Graves!" cried the footman without, not waiting for his master to appear, "here is a man come to say, that the people are burning dow the town, and your granary is blazing up to the very sky."

"Confound them! why could they not wait two hours longer, till I was paid for it!" answered Graves, half unclosing the door. "Are there no military to prevent such riots?"

"There is a messenger gone to the barracks, sir," said the man, who had brought the intelligence, and who stood, also, on the stairs.

"Then what the deuce do you come to me for!" demanded the banker, impatiently. "I cannot charge the scoundrels at the head of a regiment, nor have I the key of the fire engines. The whole town may burn for what I care, for I have had enough of it," and returning into his room, he banged the door in the faces of the footman and his friend, who, swearing an oath at him in return, ran off to see the fire, just as they would have gone to a theatre, or a horse race.

When Mr. Graves was again alone, his rage soon subsided. This new disappoint-

ment did not excite his anger, it aroused a spirit of cold, malicious defiance of the world in his heart. He hated every living creature on the face of the earth. Though he was very pale, he was apparently perfectly calm, when he went to the closet to take the sovereigns out of the writing desk, in order to pack them, also, in his carpet bag. He felt a sort of satisfaction at the idea of being able, at length, to turn this money to advantage in America.

But in spite of all the precautions of Martha, his practised eye no sooner fell upon the gold than he saw that a very considerable portion of it was wanting. He hastily gathered it together, and counted it with all expedition. His hands trembled as he did so, so great was his terror of discovery, even now, when on the eve of his escape. Twice he anxiously counted it, and then, no doubt remained, that he had been robbed. Like lightning it flashed upon his mind, that his wife

could be the only criminal. He remembered her repeated and urgent demands for money, which he had, for some weeks, invariably refused; he recalled one or two hints he had recently received, that she was largely indebted to her tradesmen, and he no longer had a doubt that Mrs. Graves had discovered and appropriated this money.

The idea was fraught with horror, and he decided, at once, to put an end to a state of suspense which was insupportable. He rang violently, but enquired, in as calm a manner as he could assume, of the servant who answered the bell, if her mistress had returned home.

The girl replied, that Mrs. Graves had been back about ten minutes, and was now in her dressing-room.

"Very well! you may go!" said Mr. Graves; and there was something so terrible in the expression of his pallid countenance, and in the tone of his voice, as

he uttered these simple words, that the girl remembered them during the whole of her after life.

After she left him, he remained seated a few minutes, reflecting on the course he intended to take. He then arose, and went along the passage, towards his wife's room. He listened, for a moment, to be assured that she was there; he then entered the dressing-room, and closed the door behind him.

Martha Graves was sitting in an easy chair, with her bonnet untied, and her shawl half thrown off, reflecting, in a very bad humour, upon the mortifying receptions she had met with, that morning, from her friends, and the confused reports she had heard concerning the riots.

She had received such hints respecting the state of the Savings' Bank, that she could not doubt, that the true cause of all the insults she had received must be some disgraceful conduct on the part of her

husband, and she was fully prepare
upbraid him, at the first opportunity.

She was considerably surprised a
appearing in her boudoir, at such ar
usual hour, and more so, when he
vanced towards her, in a firm and
liberate manner, but without utteri
word.

The terrible expression of his co
nance, and an undefinable but entire ch
in his face and figure, wrought by
events of the last few hours, banished e
other feeling but that of terror from
mind. She thought of the fire, and o
riots, and the loss of public credit, a
cause of the alteration in her husband
her own theft never once occurred to

"You look alarmed, Mr. Graves!"
cried, without allowing him time to sp
"and I don't wonder at it! none of t
terrible doings would have happened,
you listened to Mr. Dalton's advice in t
and treated your workmen better."

"Confound you and Mr. Dalton, together!" muttered Graves, between his teeth. "It had been better for me, if I had never seen the faces of either of you!"

"I wish it also, with all my heart," cried Martha, recovering her courage, when thus insulted; "we should then have escaped any disgrace from your being horse-whipped by a vagabond, in the public streets."

"Silence, Madam! I command you, or you may have cause to repent!" answered Graves, aroused at length from the calmness of his desperation. "It is not for you to talk about disgrace, who have degraded yourself, by your folly and extravagance, to become a common thief. Answer me, madam, at once!" he continued grasping her arm, and fixing his eyes on her, with a look which perfectly appalled her; "speak the truth, or I shall find means to force it from your lips! What have you done with the sovereigns, you have had

the audacity to steal from the writing desk, in my chamber closet?"

"La, Mr. Graves!" she replied, but in broken words, "how came you to suppose, that I ever touched your money?"

"Madam," he returned in a low, penetrating voice—"no prevarications! as I told you before, it may be worse for you! When did you take this money?"

"Only yesterday, upon my word," stammered Martha, "and I fully intended to put it back to-morrow."

"What, the same sovereigns? are they still in your hands?" demanded Graves, eagerly.

"Oh, no! certainly not," answered his wife, "but if I returned the exact sum, what difference could that make?"

"The difference of life and death! Woman, you drive me mad!" exclaimed Graves, in breathless accents. "What have you done with the sovereigns?"

"Well, if you will know, I paid them

yesterday evening to Mr. Clarke, the jeweller, whose bill you refused to pay."

"Did he examine them? did he ask how you came suddenly by so much gold," demanded Graves, rapidly.

"I admire that! what business had he to ask such questions, I should like to know," exclaimed Mrs. Graves, with a saucy toss of the head; "and as to stealing from you, Mr. Graves, that is all a farce! what is yours is mine, and if you refuse to give me what is necessary, I must take it, that is quite natural. You cannot want the money, for to my knowledge it has been locked up in your closet, for four years, at least,"

"How do you know that?" demanded her husband, eagerly.

"By my own eyes," answered Martha, pertly, "I saw you counting it, when you thought I lay asleep, and there can be no great harm done, if I have put a little of it into circulation."

"Woman!" exclaimed the banker, sternly,

"a truce to this chattering folly, and learn the truth, if nothing else can silence you! Your theft may bring your husband to the gallows! But your punishment is also at hand; your career of vanity and dissipation, is at an end! Our prosperity is over, and you will probably learn before many hours have passed, that your theft has compelled me to seek my personal safety in flight. You will then be informed wherefore, but it is too late to repent now, when you have published to the world, that you are the wife of a felon and a beggar."

He then released her arm, and with a smile of bitter malice, he turned away to leave the room.

Martha now really alarmed, sprang wildly from her chair, and endeavouring to detain him, implored him in passionate accents not to leave her, without explaining the meaning of his terrible words.

"You will probably know their meaning sooner than you expect, madam," he re-

turned, "without my giving myself further trouble. But let me request you not to yield to this violence, and needlessly to alarm the household. Be calm, madam, as you see I am! It is the last request I shall ever make of you, and I have a few little matters yet to arrange, for which, quiet is perfectly necessary. You may make as much noise as you please, when I am gone."

Martha would still have held him, but there was something so withering in the look and manner of her husband, as he uttered these words, that she suddenly lost all power to do so.

It was a terrible moment. All the illusions by which she had so long been surrounded, were at once rent away, and she found herself on the brink of the most fearful abyss of disgrace and ruin. Yet she dared not utter another complaint, or make another inquiry, for she understood at length, that under all his bitter calmness,

her husband was on the verge of desperation, and she comprehended enough to know that she had been the ultimate cause of the ruin, and the danger by which he was menaced.

Hardened as she was, she would have implored his pardon, but she dared not.

Graves paused when he reached the door, and cast a hurried glance round the little apartment he was leaving for the last time.

Martha thought she perceived some signs of relenting on his hard countenance, and bursting into tears she rushed towards him, and endeavoured to take his hand.

"Pardon, oh pardon me," she said, "I meant not to injure you. Don't desert me in the hour of trouble."

"Woman!" he said, sternly, "make no appeal to my compassion; it is long since any love existed between us, if it ever did. You have abused my wealth, my generosity, and my protection, long enough. For the

future, you must try if you can be more prosperous without them. Where I go— I go alone!"

At that moment they were both startled by a loud knocking at the street-door.

"Give your orders, madam, that you can receive no visitors," said Graves, ringing violently as he spoke, and he then sprung to the window, which commanded a view of the front door.

A party of policemen were there waiting for admission.

"Let no one, at peril of their life, open the front door!" exclaimed the banker, when a servant came in answer to the bell.

"There are two police officers, sir," he said, "have come into the kitchen by the back door. They were inquiring if you were in the house, as I came up."

Graves turned as pale as a corpse, but he uttered not a word. He darted past the astonished domestic with the swiftness of light; and Martha distinctly heard that

he double locked his chamber door after he entered.

"Can you tell me," she eagerly demanded of the servant, "what these men have come about?"

"I cannot say exactly, ma'am," he replied, "but it is something about the robbery of Mr. Dalton's bank fourteen years ago, for they say Mr. Charles Seaton after all was not the robber; and somebody else has been paying the marked sovereigns to Mr. Clarke, the jeweller, and that has brought the whole thing to light."

Martha repeatedly changed colour as she listened to this confused narrative, which she unfortunately too well understood.

"This is dreadful," she murmured, at length, and pressing her hand upon her heart, she sat for some minutes, in a kind of stupor, till hearing the steps of the policemen ascending the stairs, she started up, uttered a loud scream, and fell senseless to the ground.

It was fortunate for herself that she lay in this state for above a quarter of an hour. She did not hear the attempts of the police to force open Graves's chamber, nor the report of a pistol, which was the only answer they received to their repeated demands for admission.

She knew not, that when the door was broken open, the body of the wretched Graves was found lifeless and weltering in blood upon his bed, where he had fallen dead, still grasping the weapon of self-destruction in his right hand.

When Martha first recovered from her swoon, and none of the female servants around her dared to answer her questions, she called aloud for her husband, she insisted on seeing him, and had already arisen from the bed to which she had been carried whilst insensible, when the physician arrived. Finding her health by no means seriously attacked, he judged it best to inform her of Mr. Graves's death, that she might conduct herself with the ap-

pearance of propriety, suitable to so awful an occasion.

Martha was at first much affected by the intelligence; but her affliction was soon forgotten in selfish anxiety concerning her own interests under such a sudden change of circumstances. She dreaded that the liabilities of her husband far exceeded his possessions, and that she should for the future be entirely dependant on Mr. Dalton for support.

After the official investigation, the accounts of the Savings' Bank proved to be even in a worse state than had been anticipated. The deficit amounted to more than twenty-thousand pounds, the greatest part of which had been appropriated by Mr. Graves. When the property of the banker was disposed of, for the benefit of his creditors, only a small part of this sum could be replaced, and the other gentlemen connected with the establishment felt themselves bound to supply the deficiency by voluntary contributions.

Nothing therefore remained for Martha Graves, and when the creditors offered to grant her a small annuity, Mr. Dalton interposed to decline it, and engaged himself to pay her double the amount.

The sovereigns found in the travelling sack of Graves, when combined with the evidences of old Molly and Lucy, left no further doubt of his criminality, whilst the innocence of Seaton was thus fully established.

CHAPTER XIV.

Soon may this fluttering spark of vital flame
Forsake its languid melancholy frame!
Soon may these eyes their trembling lustre close,
Welcome the dreamless night of long repose!
Soon may this woe-worn spirit seek the bourne
Where, lull'd to slumber, grief forgets to mourn.

CAMPBELL.

THE rebellion that day had been put down without much difficulty. Although several lives were lost, no property had been injured, except that of Graves. The people, after the second fatal discharge of musquetry, had fled in all directions, conceal-

ing themselves as they best could in the neighbouring houses, or escaping at once into the country, where they hoped to be more secure from pursuit.

A severe search was made for the ring-leaders, but the magistrates with a feeling of compassion for the sufferings of the people, which had driven them to these excesses, showed little desire to arrest any, who had not been prominently active in the attack.

Forrest, having been recognised by many, was peculiarly an object of pursuit; but during the whole of the afternoon following the riot, not the slightest trace could be discovered of him. The 'Black Bull,' as a suspected house, was narrowly searched for him, but there, as the landlord protested with truth, he had never entered after the fray.

Night closed, at length, over the scene of desolation and ruin, made by man's ungoverned passions, during the preceding day. But fire was still smouldering under

the ashes of the fallen granary, and angry feelings were still unquenched, in many a troubled breast.

Sorrow, and mourning, and fear, crouched that night in many of the lowly cottages, where only want had previously been felt; and want was not allayed, though other afflictions, ten times greater, were added to its pangs.

Some of the men repented—some murmured and threatened, with impotent rage; but all felt that nothing was to be gained for them by violence and disorder.

But their resolution was not broken by this conviction. Their knowledge of their rights, and their wants, had become too definite and exact, for their hopes of redress to be annihilated by the first triumph of their opponents. When the heat of passion had subsided, they remembered again and again, and pondered long over the words spoken by Seaton in the loft—"It is only by moral force that you can obtain redress. It is not from others

we must expect to obtain all we desire—we must laboriously seek it for ourselves, by mutual understanding, and universal association."

The struggle had profitted little; but a seed had fallen, which may, hereafter, bear fruit of inestimable value—the moral education—the moral discipline—and the social welfare, of the self-respecting people of England.

How many are there, like Forrest, who have broken the peace of society, and destroyed their own welfare in life, solely in consequence of a vicious education. Born with good abilities, ardent passions, and an impetuous character, he was still possessed of generous feelings, and might, under proper training, have become an honest and industrious man. But his parents were incapable of assisting, by moral culture at home, the formal instruction of the village school, and spoilt by flattery and indulgence, the love of pleasure quickly degenerated into vice and extrava-

gance, which were his ruin; and after a long struggle with the world, he was finally a criminal, and a fugitive.

Well acquainted with the neighbourhood, he had escaped from the pursuit of the soldiers, and lay, for some hours, concealed in an old hay-loft. From thence, as day declined, he ventured into the plantations, which Seaton had passed with Carr, on their way to the loft. But he had scarcely been there more than half an hour, when he was alarmed by the approach of a party in pursuit of him. He had just time to spring down into the grass-grown opening of an old coal pit, and conceal himself beneath the brambles which overhung it, when his pursuers came along the path where he had lately stood.

He heard his own name pronounced with rude menaces, as the soldiers passed along; but they seemed to have no suspicion that any human being could have ventured into the noxious hole, where the fugitive lay hid, and they proceeded

deeper into the woods, without pausing even to examine the uneven ground.

When their voices were lost in the distance, Forrest ventured to creep again to the surface of the earth, and trusting that, for a time at least, no further search would be made for him in that direction, he sat down on an old stone, grown over with moss, and divided by a screen of tangled bushes from the path.

Hopeless and mournful were the thoughts of the solitary man as he rested there, with his head bowed down upon his knees, and surveyed the past and the future. Bitter tears fell from his eyes, when he remembered his childhood, and his mother's love, and the vain hopes she had indulged of his future destiny. And what was he now, who had been the most dashing youth in the village! an outcast and a fugitive, without a friend upon the face of the earth, or a penny to buy a morsel of bread! and yet worse—a criminal, in momentary danger of arrest and punishment.

He felt, for the first time, with agonising remorse, that blood was upon his hands. The blood of the poor victims whom he had excited to violence, in order to revenge his own personal injuries on the man who had been his sister's destroyer!

Their fearful scream of terror, on the second discharge of musquetry, still rang in his ears, and it seemed ever, as if he heard the voice of Lucy mingling with this heart-rending cry!

His uncertainty, as to this poor creature's fate, added greatly to his anxiety, and he felt it was impossible for him to seek safety by flying to a more remote part of the country, or endeavouring to get on board some outward-bound ship, until he had ascertained what had become of her. He remembered, also, his solemn promise to meet Seaton once more. He had a secret on his conscience, which, impelled by his better feelings, he had resolved to disclose, before he left England,

so as, in some measure, to make amends for the past.

He set little value on life, and, with a reckless courage, he resolved, that very night, to venture to the cottage of Carr, and endeavour, if possible, to see Seaton. Weary and faint, from long watching, fatigue and want of food, it was past midnight, when he arrived at the workman's dwelling. Doubtful of the reception he might meet with, after the terrible events of the preceding day, he stood at the door, for some minutes, before he could decide to knock for admission, at such an untimely hour.

All was still within the cottage—the furze and low brushwood on the common seemed sleeping in the moonlight, for not a leaf or blossom stirred. The sounds of the tumult were hushed, and no traces of it were to be seen, except the smoke still rising from the blackened walls of the granary, which was distinctly visible from the spot where Forrest stood.

At length, a dog began to bark furiously in one of the neighbouring cottages, and fearful of detection, the fugitive knocked at Carr's door for admission.

The good man, who was unable to sleep, after the agitated events of the day, heard him at once, and, opening a small window up-stairs, put out his head, and inquired who was there.

"A friend," was Forrest's reply. "I come on an affair concerning Mr. Charles Seaton. Open, and let me in, and then you shall know more."

Carr waited for no further information, but instantly descended with a light, and unclosed the door. He started with surprise, when his eyes fell on the haggard features and disordered garments of the fugitive.

"Forrest!" he exclaimed. "Is it possible, you have ventured back so near the town?"

"You will not betray me!" he replied, keeping his eyes fixed with considerable

anxiety on the face of the workman; but that honest face at once reassured him.

"I will betray no man, who seeks shelter under my roof, who has not the crime of murder to answer for," he replied. "Come in, let me fasten the door, that we may not be observed. There are many on the look out to-night."

"No suspicion can attach to you, Carr, so I am safe here, for a time. I pray you, give me a morsel of bread, for I have not tasted food since the morning, and then I will tell you why I have come here; I have not ventured on my own account."

Carr, without making any answer, proceeded with all despatch, to place a large cheese, a loaf of bread, and a jug of water before the hungry man, and much as Forrest was to blame, his heart was moved to compassion, when he saw the eagerness with which he ate, and observed his dejected and desolate appearance. It was not only poverty and fatigue, by which he was fearfully changed, but the sense of

guilt bowed him down, and gave a restless, eager expression to his countenance, which betrayed his inward agony.

"Thank you Carr! thank you with my whole heart," he said in tremulous accents, when he had satisfied the cravings of his hunger. "Some would have turned me from their doors, lest they should be compromised by their compassion, but you, who have been a good man all your life, Carr, can afford to do an act of kindness to a poor sinner with impunity.—God will reward you. And now you must tell me, if it be possible for me to speak with Mr. Seaton, before the day dawns, for longer, I cannot venture to stay in this neighbourhood ?"

"If you have anything important to say to him," answered the workman, "I could bring him here in ten minutes, but most likely you would prefer going to him, for he is watching by your sister's bedside."

"What do you tell me !" exclaimed

Forrest. "Was Lucy wounded? Is she dying?"

"She was wounded!" answered Carr, "but the physician gives hopes of her life."

"Who cared for her, who assisted her in this dreadful state?" demanded the fugitive, with breathless anxiety.

"Mr. Seaton and I removed her from the street, soon after we saw her fall," replied Carr, "and she lies now, in a cottage not far from hence."

"Heaven will reward you both! Were all men so good, there would be no rebellions," cried the fugitive. "Does she know to whom she owes her life?"

"Yes," replied the workman, "and she has confessed all her perjury and falsehood, in the presence of Mr. Dalton, so that he and his nephew are happily reconciled. It is a frightful story, and it would be well after all that has happened, if the Lord would please to take her."

"Have they forgiven her?" demanded Forrest, eagerly.

"They forgave her without hesitation," answered Carr, "and afforded her every assistance in their power. They are both too noble hearted, to bear enmity against a repentant and unfortunate sinner."

"Let us go to her, Carr!" said Forrest, abruptly arising. "I have something to tell Mr. Seaton and Lucy, which must not be delayed. In your company, I can venture without fear."

"You will, nevertheless, do well to put off your own coat, and take one of mine instead," was Carr's simple reply.

The fugitive followed this advice, and when his dress was put into somewhat decent order, they left the cottage together. Not a word was spoken by either, as they crossed the common to Molly Temple's.

Seaton was at that time the only one awake in the old woman's cottage. Lucy had ceased for several hours to suffer pain,

and if she did not actually sleep, she lay tranquil and motionless, with the appearance of slumber. Molly had prepared a sort of bed for Grace Dalton, in a little room, only divided by a few rough boards from the kitchen, and the old woman herself, overcome by fatigue, slept very soundly, in a wooden arm chair. But Charles Seaton felt no drowsiness! his mind was too busily occupied by the happy change which had so suddenly taken place in his fortunes; and as he kept watch by the bedside of the sufferer, numberless pleasant visions of the future, when united to his beloved cousin, flitted brightly before his mind. He was suddenly disturbed from these waking dreams, by Carr's summons for admission.

The appointment made by Forrest, flashed immediately on his mind, so that he was not at all surprised when he saw him follow the workman into the cottage.

"I have kept my word, sir," said the fugitive, "and, even if I had not given it,

I would have ventured much to thank you, for your kindness to my unfortunate sister."

"Speak softly," answered Seaton, pointing towards the bed. "She seems to sleep."

"Is she badly wounded?" demanded Forrest.

"The surgeon thought not," was the reply. "But she has suffered greatly since he was here; and now this sudden ease and stupor, make me fear that mortification has taken place."

Old Molly and Miss Dalton, being both awakened by the entrance of Forrest, joined Carr at the fire-side—for they were unwilling to intrude on the last sad interview between brother and sister.

Forrest advanced softly towards the bed, where Lucy lay apparently unconscious of all around her. Pale and haggard, from loss of blood—the coarseness consequent on her recent evil course of life, had disappeared, and some remains of her early beauty might

still be traced in her sharp and pallid features.

Forrest gazed at her, till his eyes overflowed with tears.

"Poor Lucy," he said, as he took her hand, which lay on the coverlid in his. "I thought to revenge her, and I have caused her death."

"Hush! she hears you," said Seaton, softly; and as he spoke, Lucy unclosed her eyes, and looked fixedly and earnestly at her brother.

"John," she said, "I am glad you are there. I longed to see you once more, before I go away for ever! Poor John! I have only been a disgrace and a trouble to you, here."

"No, no!" murmured her brother kindly, "you will not leave me, Lucy!"

"It is better I go from this world of trouble;" she returned, "where I have long known nothing but shame and suffering!"

"I will take you where no one knows your

shame—and we will work and be happy yet together."

"Ah! John! it is too late," she murmured; "there no peace for me more, upon this earth. My head is clear now—I see all my wickedness—but it is too late!"

"But Mr. Dalton and Mr. Seaton have forgiven you," said her brother; "and you will lead a better life for the future, in the hope of God's mercy."

"Can such as I hope for heavenly pardon?" was her sad reply.

"Lucy," replied Forrest, in an earnest voice. "I cannot long remain with you. I must fly to save my life, but I leave you in the care of the noble and benevolent, who will provide for you, till your wounds are healed; and then you must follow me to another land. But it may be, Lucy, that we part to-night, never more to meet again—and I must, therefore, now unfold a secret to you, which has long been a burthen on my conscience. I have sinned

both against you and Mr. Seaton. I have still comfort in store for you, which you little expect."

The dying woman hastily raised herself on her elbow, and fixed her eager eyes upon her brother's face, with a wild look of curiosity and anxiety.

"I almost dread to tell you my secret, now; but you must know it Lucy," continued Forrest. "Your child is still alive?"

"My child!—what child? I never had a child!" she wildly exclaimed.

"The child you told me was your own, at least," he replied.

"What! the babe I delivered to you on the night of the fire! Did she not die as you told me, on the high seas?" she cried, with breathless eagerness. "Answer me—oh! answer me John, and then I shall die in peace?"

"No; she did not die—she lived to grow a fair and lovely woman—and to be the

support and comfort of her mother in her old age."

"You mistake, I tell you—you mistake! She was no child of mine," murmured Lucy; and she laughed wildly as she sunk back on her pillow. "It was Mr. Dalton's child! whom I saved from Graves's cruelty!"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Seaton, "what do I hear! Can it be possible that Amy Dalton is still alive? But what interest could you have, Forrest, in deceiving even your sister about the child?"

"Yes! why did you write to me from Sydney, that it died upon the voyage?" inquired Lucy, in a faint, unearthly voice.

"It was wrong, very wrong, I acknowledge," answered Forrest. "I did it for money, for gain, which makes rascals of us all. You know my wife and I had also charge of Mr. Seaton's little sister, and I was to receive a handsome sum on her safe arrival in the colony. She sickened and died on the voyage."

"My sister died, do you say?" exclaimed Seaton, in utter astonishment.

"Yes, sir, your sister died. The little girls were of the same age; they bore some resemblance to each other; I knew that you had not seen your sister for long, and might suppose, that time had somewhat altered her, and I determined to secure the promised passage money, and at the same time provide for my sister's unfortunate babe by putting it in the place of the dead. You did not discover the deceit, sir, and have brought it up as your sister; but your sister's bones are whitening at the bottom of the sea!"

"And Amy Seaton then, is Mr. Dalton's daughter!" exclaimed Grace.

"No! no! it is impossible!" cried Seaton, who was like one stunned and bewildered at this announcement. "You must bring proofs! Such a story is not to be believed on your mere word. Oh, Amy, my sweet, innocent Amy! I have long loved you as

my mother's child, and I cannot believe lightly, that you are not my sister."

"She is good, and we will love her all the same, Charles," murmured Grace, as she pressed his hand in hers; but he heard her not, and distractedly exclaimed,

"Have I then no sister?"

"It is too true," returned Forrest. "When Lucy gave the babe into my arms, six months before your sister was brought to us, she assured me it was her child, and she paid me fifty pounds for its future maintenance. She had never been married to my knowledge, nor did she tell me who was the father of the child. Your sister's body was thrown overboard, for she died of fever after we had been a month at sea, and the first girl which Lucy gave to my care is now called Amy Seaton. It is possible, that, as she says, it may be Mr. Dalton's child."

"Yes, did I not tell you so," she cried, whilst tears streamed down her pallid

cheeks, "did I not tell you, I carried it from the house alive!—and she lives, John, and her father's curse will no longer be upon my head! Oh, bless you, bless you, that you have come to tell me this," and she stretched out her arms towards him.

Forrest spoke not; his heart was too full for words, but he bent down and kissed her tenderly.

Grace smoothed the poor creature's pillow, and when exhausted, her arms fell faintly from her brother's neck, she laid her softly down.

"Dare we believe this extraordinary revelation?" demanded Seaton, turning after a pause of silence towards Forrest.

"I have long suspected the truth," he returned, "above all, when Lucy told me that she had saved Mr. Dalton's child. I will give you all the proofs I possess. So saying, he drew forth from his pocket a small parcel containing the remains of a broken coral, tied to a blue riband, and a child's white frock. "These things I have

carefully saved," he said, "they were worn by the little girl, the night Lucy gave her to me."

"Merciful Providence, how wonderful are thy ways!" cried old Molly, when she saw these articles. "And I can swear, that Mr. Dalton's daughter wore both this frock and this coral, the morning I kissed her, before I left the house. I never saw her again. But I suspected that Miss Amy was Mr. Dalton's child from the first. I never could believe that she was Mr. Seaton's sister—for she has a cut over the right eye—which Miss Dalton got by a fall. It was for this I was so anxious to find you, Lucy. You must remember it?"

"Oh, yes! I remember it well—it was all by my carelessness," answered the poor woman, in a feeble voice.

"Thank heaven; for Mr. Dalton's sake I rejoice," exclaimed Seaton. "If Amy is not my sister, she is not less dear to me as my uncle's child."

"Yes, dearest Charles," said Grace, and her eyes were full of tears as she gazed on him with unutterable happiness, "and it must be a source of infinite joy to you, to feel, that to you, whom he so long believed the cause of all his affliction, he is indebted for more than the life of his child; for you have rescued her from ignorance and vice, and ruin, and trained her to every female virtue."

"It was not my doing," answered Charles, "but that of a higher power; and I can acknowledge now, that even my afflictions were for good, when they placed me in a situation to become the saviour and protector of my uncle's only child."

"Oh! raise me—raise me!" murmured the feeble voice of Lucy at this moment. "John, kiss me once more," she said, when Molly and Grace had propped her up in the bed. "Pray God to forgive me, and repent, John—repent, and lead a good life, before it is too late, that we may meet again

for eternity. A blessing on you all," she murmured almost inaudibly.

For more than half an hour, those around the bed watched her heavy breathing, and her fixed eyes, with that profound awe, which all feel when conscious that a soul is hovering on eternity, whether it be the soul of rich or poor. In death all are equal.

Suddenly the breathing ceased—the eyes remained unclosed—and a quiet smile parted the lips—but all was still. The erring victim of another's crimes and her own vanity, had departed to final judgment.

After a short time spent in prayer, old Molly laid her hand on Grace Dalton's arm.

"Dry your tears, Miss Dalton," she said, we must hope that her sorrows and her sufferings are over, for her repentance was sincere. And now, my dear young lady, you must leave me to lay out the body. I am used to such things. Mr. Charles will

take you to Mr. Dalton's, for you must not remain here, now."

"You are right, Molly," said Charles, drawing his cousin's arm through his; "we can now be no longer of service here; and my uncle must hear the good news we have to communicate to him without delay. Forrest," he added, turning towards the fugitive, "both Mr. Dalton and I owe you a debt of gratitude which shall not be forgotten. Your sister's body shall be decently interred—and you have now to think of nothing but providing for your safety."

"I would gladly get on board a ship, and leave the country," was his reply.

"Return with Carr to his cottage; no one will search for you there; and care shall be taken to secure your passage to America, and money furnished to establish you in some decent way of life on arriving there. Remember your good resolutions—and may better days await you. Farewell!"

So saying, Seaton held out his hand to the fugitive. Forrest pressed it warmly.

"Thank you, Mr. Seaton," he said. "You have taught me, by your generosity, to think better of my fellow-creatures than I have done for long. Your example and your kindness will never be forgotten; and if my life be spared, I hope you may, one day, learn that you have been the means of saving a fellow-creature from utter ruin, whose heart was not entirely depraved, and who will remember you with gratitude to the last hour of his life. God bless you, sir, and this lady likewise. May your future lives be as happy as they deserve."

So saying, he extended his hands to Grace and Seaton. Both then wished him farewell, and immediately left the cottage.

Forrest soon afterwards departed with Carr, and old Molly remained alone with the dead.

CHAPTER XV.

What need of clamorous bells, or ribands gay,
These humble nuptials to proclaim or grace,
Angels of Love look down upon the place.
————Faultless does the maid appear,
No disproportion in her soul—no strife.

WORDSWORTH.

WHEN Charles Seaton and Grace arrived at Mr. Dalton's, they found as they expected, that their uncle and Amy had both retired to bed some hours before, and after a brief consultation, they agreed that it was best for Charles to return to Mr. Barnes's for the remainder of the night; and that the

important disclosure they had to make to Mr. Dalton, should be delayed till the morning.

Seaton found some difficulty in obtaining admission at the worthy clerk's, for both he and his housekeeper had long been fast asleep, and when Mr. Barnes, after recognizing his voice, at length unbarred the door, he appeared in night-cap and slippers, in utter consternation at his guest's irregular proceedings.

But Charles soon pacified him by the assurance that only the most extraordinary circumstances could have forced him to remain two nights from home, and he promised to relate the whole story to him on the morrow.

The old gentleman was half bewildered with terrors of riots and revolutions, but Seaton protested that all danger of anything of the kind was entirely past, and that he might sleep the remainder of the night in perfect tranquillity. He then wished him good night, and gladly sought

repose, after all the agitating scenes he had recently past through.

Grace found the chamber she had formerly occupied at her uncle's already prepared to receive her, and old Hannah conducted her thither with many expressions of pleasure, at her unexpected return.

This trifling circumstance seemed to render her happiness complete; and she was no sooner alone, than she seated herself, to gaze on all the well known objects around her with unutterable delight. Every article the room contained brought to her remembrance some anxious thought in the past. There she had wept the absence of Seaton for many long years, and now on the same spot she felt that hopes which she then scarcely dared to form were fully realized; that Seaton's innocence was proved and acknowledged by his uncle; that Mr. Dalton had himself joined their hands, and more than all, that the child whose supposed death had caused them so much sorrow, not only survived, but had

received an education by Charles Seaton's care, which rendered her an honour and a blessing to all connected with her.

It is easier to describe great sorrow than extreme joy, and we will only say, that Grace lay down that night to rest, with such a feeling of perfect happiness as it rarely falls to the lot of mortals to enjoy, and her sleep was as profound and unbroken as that of childhood.

When she arose on the morrow, her first care was to send the old gardener in quest of Molly, whose presence she desired during the disclosure of Amy's relationship to Mr. Dalton.

Charles Seaton soon afterwards arrived, and they held a private consultation as to the best method of breaking their important secret to their uncle. They agreed it must be done with extreme caution, for they were not without fears of the effect it might produce. Seaton was welcomed by Mr. Dalton as a long lost son. Amy then joined them at breakfast, unconscious of the

great change that awaited her; lovely in the freshness of youth and innocence, and gay and happy to behold the happiness of those she loved.

All gloom had passed away from the venerable countenance of Mr. Dalton when surrounded by the relatives, from whom he had so recently believed himself for ever divided, he enjoyed to the utmost, the blessings flowing from reconciliation and love. He listened with profound interest to all they recounted to him, concerning the visit of Forrest to his sister, and agreed with Charles Seaton, there could be no crime on their part, in assisting the unfortunate man to escape from the country, where his punishment could only have excited further irritation amongst the workmen. The death of Lucy, he said, was the greatest mercy which could have been vouchsafed to her; but though he could not grieve for her, all allusion to her affected him greatly, by reviving the memory of his child.

"But there comes old Molly," said Grace, observing the widow enter by the garden gate. "Perhaps she has something new to relate to us. Amy, my dear, go to her for a few minutes. Your brother and I wish to speak to Mr. Dalton for a short time alone. I will come for you and Molly when you may return."

"Yes, dearest Grace," said Amy, with an arch-smile, as if she knew that they were going to talk about her cousin's marriage, and she arose, and left the room.

"I am all impatience, my dear niece," said Mr. Dalton, as soon as Amy was out of hearing. "What new secret can you and Charles have to confide to me?"

"It is one which concerns you most of any one, dearest uncle," answered Seaton, "although the discovery of it has afforded us inexpressible happiness."

"Whatever affords you pleasure, must be a source of satisfaction to me," returned Mr. Dalton, more astonished and interested

by the agitated manner of his nephew, than by his words.

"Yes! but as Charles says, this secret concerns you most of any one," said Grace, perceiving that her cousin was embarrassed how to proceed. "You must prepare yourself, sir, to hear something extraordinary—agitating—and most joyful."

"Grace, what can you mean?" demanded her uncle, now greatly excited. "There is only one thing upon earth now, which could affect me as you describe, and that is impossible! Lucy herself told us last night, that it was impossible."

"What is impossible, dearest uncle?" demanded Grace, though she knew very well to what he alluded.

"Why do you ask?—you must know that since Charles's innocence is proved, no discovery can agitate my heart, except that of my child's existence! and Lucy's confession last night destroyed all hope."

"But if Lucy herself was deceived,"

rejoined Miss Dalton, in trembling acc
and as she uttered the words, she
fously watched her uncle's countenanc
she dreaded the effect they might pro
—Its agitation was fearful.

"Grace! what mean you? Have
cause for what you say?—you must—
have—you are not one to play needle
with an old man's feelings. But tell
all at once—no more doubt and hesita
—they only torture me. I can bear
as I have borne sorrow.! tell me at on
does she live?"

"She does!" answered Grace, in scar
audible accents, for her agitation wa
great as Mr. Dalton's.

"But she has been neglected—she
rude—uneducated?—tell me all! be
what she may, I rejoice—for she is
my child."

"No, dearest uncle, she is all that
heart of the fondest father could wi
answered Grace, now weeping outright.

"Heaven be praised for its exceeding mercy!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton, and he sank back in his chair totally overpowered.

Seaton gave him a glass of water which revived him greatly.

"Charles, do you know all this, also?" inquired the old man, looking earnestly in his nephew's face. "How have you learnt it! where is my child? oh, tell me all as quickly as you can."

"Forrest confessed last night, that your daughter did not die at sea," answered Seaton. "If you will promise to be calm, I will tell you."

"Oh, yes, I am calm, perfectly calm! tell me—tell me—"

"She is now waiting in this house to receive your blessing!"

"Bring her to me—fear nothing—but let me see her—let me fold her to my heart—this suspense is agony."

Seaton immediately left the room.

Mr. Dalton sat with his lips half unclosed, and his eyes fixed eagerly on the

door, during the whole time of his absence, but he uttered not a word. Grace watched him with extreme anxiety.

In a few minutes, there were steps audible in the passage. Mr. Dalton sprang up, but before he could cross the room, the door was unclosed, and Seaton stood before him, holding Amy by the hand. Old Molly followed them.

"Charles!" exclaimed the old man, trembling from head to foot, "what do I see?"

"You behold your daughter, sir," he returned; "and she is worthy of all the love you can bestow upon her. To me it is a source of inexpressible exultation to restore her to you thus."

"My child! my long lost—my beloved child! I felt it from the first moment I beheld her angelic countenance!" cried the old man in piercing tones, and he folded his arms around the astonished girl, and pressed her to his heart.

"She knows no—thing—we have told

her nothing," said Grace, smiling at Amy's embarrassment.

"She has already promised to love me as a daughter," said Mr. Dalton; "and when she learns that I am really her father, she will, I trust, only love me the more."

"Henceforth she will be called Amy Dalton, instead of Amy Seaton; and she will have a father, instead of a brother, that will be the only change," said Seaton, in trembling accents. "But I hope," he added, taking the hand of the half bewildered girl in his, "that we shall still continue to love each other, as brother and sister."

"Oh Charles, what does all this mean?" inquired Amy, gazing anxiously from Mr. Dalton to Seaton. "Do not say that I am not your sister; your own little sister, for whom you have worked so hard, and who loves you so truly. Let me be your sister in prosperity, as I was in care and sorrow."

"In affection, ever my sister," returned

Charles. "But, dearest Amy, you must now learn, that my real sister was the little girl who died with you on board of ship, and that you are Mr. Dalton's long lost daughter, whom Lucy saved and confided to her brother's care as her own child. He has told us all; and old Molly confirms all he has said, by remembering the cut above your right eye, and the manner you came by it."

"Yes," said Molly Temple; "if Mr. Dalton has any doubt, that Miss Amy is his own child, he has only to look at that mark, and remember how frightened and angry he was, when Lucy let the child fall upon the pavement."

"Yes, you are right," said the old gentleman, after anxiously surveying the scar. "I see it now, and can no longer have a doubt. Moreover, her resemblance to her mother struck me the first moment I beheld her."

"I observed it also," said Molly. "I have also brought these things which For-

rest gave me. He said the child wore them the night Lucy brought her to him,' and she gave the frock and the broken coral to Mr. Dalton. He recognised both for the other half of the trinket he had preserved amongst the treasured relics of his child. Again he embraced his new found daughter, with unspeakable delight, for he was now convinced that not the slightest doubt existed of her identity.

"Charles," he then said, grasping his nephew's hand convulsively, "how shall I express my gratitude? my shame? To you, whom I treated as the murderer of my child, I owe not only her life, but her virtuous education, and the careful cultivation of her sweet and charming character. The obligation is greater than it can ever be in my power to repay."

"I am already richly rewarded in being restored to the esteem and affection of my friends," answered Seaton, his countenance glowing with pleasure as he gazed on the happy group around him.

Little now remains for us to relate.

The evidence of Graves's guilt, and Charles Seaton's innocence was legally arranged by Mr. Vernon, and forwarded by Mr. Dalton to the Secretary of State. The truth was too clearly attested not to be immediately acknowledged, and the recognition of Seaton's innocence, accompanied by a free pardon from the Queen, was returned with as little delay as possible.

When the facts became known in Seaton's native place, all the influential inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood sought, by every mark of honour and attention, to obliterate the remembrance of the long and unmerited sufferings of a man of a character so noble. But his best consolation was in his union with Grace Dalton, which took place, as soon as he had obtained his pardon, and in witnessing the happiness enjoyed by Mr. Dalton, in the society of his daughter.

The worthy Mr. Barnes lived to remind them frequently, that he had prognosti-

cated all this, to pursue his daily occupations with unbroken regularity, and to practise every evening, with unwearied patience, his favorite air,

"Hope told a flattering tale."

Uncle Philip rejoiced as much as Grace Dalton herself, in the public acknowledgment of his nephew's innocence. The habits of the old man were not in the least changed, by his accession to fortune, and he continued to garden, and to fish, and to talk philosophy, as he had done for years before. The only alteration which occurred in his little household was, that Charles Seaton persuaded him, as he grew older and more feeble, to take old Molly Temple as a housekeeper.

Grace left her uncle's house upon her marriage, but only to remove to a pretty farm, about a quarter of a mile distant, so that though she lived apart with her hus-

husband, they seemed only to form one household with Amy and her father.

Mr. Dalton openly declared his intention, of dividing his fortune between his daughter and his nephew, and at once gave up the management of his colliery to Seaton.

He well knew that under his enlightened direction, and with the helping hand of Grace, the interests of the work people, whose welfare and happiness it had been the object of his life to promote, would be zealously and humanely protected and advanced.

Grace and her husband, thoroughly taught in the school of adversity, to understand the wants and sufferings of their fellow creatures, had now a large field for the exercise of their benevolent zeal, for the progress of true civilization. But the chief object to which they directed their attention, was the moral and industrial education of the rising generation of both sexes.

Mrs. Graves retired under a false name, to a small village in North Wales. The annuity paid her by Mr. Dalton was almost entirely spent in dress. But she was soon weary of this humble and retired life, and married at the end of a year, a strolling player, with whom she has gone out to improve her fortune in America.

The son of Mr. Vernon the solicitor, who had been Seaton's friend in Australia, has returned to England, and settled near his father. It is said that his chief inducement for doing so, was an early attachment to Amy, and there is every probability that Mr. Dalton will, before long, bestow the hand of his daughter upon her early benefactor.

THE END.

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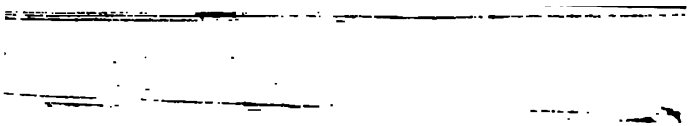
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